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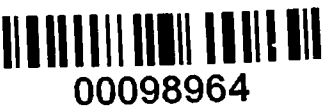
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An Idler in Old France

BY

Tighe Hopkins

AUTHOR OF

'THE DUNGEONS OF OLD PARIS,' 'LADY BONNIE'S EXPERIMENT,'
'PEPITA OF THE PAGODA,' 'NELL HAFFENDEN,'
'THE NUGENTS OF CARRICONNA,' ETC.

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PREFACE.

HERE is a sheaf of papers, most miscellaneous in appearance, but dealing principally with aspects of the social life of older France. The record from which I had to choose is rich and varied, and it was not possible to tell more than a little of the story in the compass of one modest volume. The subjects were selected partly for their intrinsic interest (as it seemed), and partly for the reason that to few of them is much space allotted in the novel of history. Some suppression of detail has been necessary, for in many things the French were no nicer than we were up to the beginning of this century, but the reader may think there is candour enough in the chapters on the streets of old Paris, the toilet, and the table. This is perhaps sufficient by way of preface, for the book, such as it is, has been explained. If the subject be not to the reader's taste, he will not go with me for any invitation of mine; should it

like him, there are many curious and pleasant paths not over-trodden yet in this romantic tract, which might be for another day.

The paper on 'Writing and Writing Materials' is reprinted from the *Fortnightly Review*. 'Gavarni' and 'An Episode in the History of the Comédie Française' appeared first in *Macmillan*. Of the two papers concerning 'The Bagne,' one was published originally in *Pearson's Magazine* and the other in the *Leisure Hour*. 'Two Civilities' was a contribution to the series, 'Among my Books,' in *Literature*.

T. H.

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AN IDLER IN OLD FRANCE

A NEW PICTURE OF OLD PARIS

I.

It is vain to seek in fiction for any faithful picture of the Paris that has been. But might not the same be said in respect of any, or almost any, mediæval capital? We scarcely know what any one of them was actually like; I do not mean in regard to the externals of architecture, the marshalling of crowds in proper costume on gala days, the processions of priests, magistrates, councillors in fur, or jingling soldiers, the fêtes and fairs and mystery shows in the crooked streets or at the crossways, the scenes of the pillory, the gibbet, or the lighted pile,—for all of these have been managed often, and very well managed. But the old town itself under its physical

aspects, naked and not disguised by literary art; the normal visage of these old streets as they are lived in through the seasons, and not as they are glimpsed while the pageant is passing or the booths of the fair obstruct them; the phases of the old town as it spreads wider and climbs higher, bursting its old bonds, as every capital town, or every town that is to become a capital, is everlastingly doing; above all, the squalor, the malodour, and the frank contempt of decency in which the whole population lives contentedly, from the king in his unsavoury palace to the scavenger whose leaky tumbril distributes its liquid black contents among pedestrians who have never the refuge of a footpath: this, the real and habitual *status*, romance does not disclose.

The novel of history, a pure convention, though at its best a most fascinating convention, goes sparkling and bustling through certain picked phases of the life of some age remote, with clatter of hoofs and clink of steel, delightful stolen interviews, abductions and rescues, duels to the death, fateful errands, and the careful losing of documents on which everything depends.

But this captivating art shows us a great deal less of historic life than it pretends to do; and since adventure and swiftness of movement are prime conditions of success, the artist may not tarry long

in scenes where nothing sets the pulse a-beating. There is much besides, of high and perennial interest in its relation to social and domestic progress, which a romancer the most conscientious could not write of if he would. If he did write of it, his publisher would refuse him the indispensable assistance of print. His book would get none but a backstair circulation in manuscript.

During the period in which hygiene, whether public or private, had scarcely any existence in Europe as a scientific theory, and almost no existence whatever as a practised art (and this period was not quite ended at the beginning of our own century), the notion of decency, as we call it, either indoors or out of doors, was not more advanced in the politest and most populous capital than it is at this day in the least visited habitations of the Esquimaux.

To take one example at random: you may describe the plague almost as realistically as you please, but it would tax a Flaubert's genius in fitting the idea with the word to set out, for publication, the literal situation, in London, in Paris, in Florence, or in Rome, out of which the plague arose. We should find the conditions proper to the breeding of disease, not only in every street of the town—in things seen every day by everybody, and noticed

by nobody—but on the stairway and in the corridors of the palace, in the courtyards of princes and nobles, in the cloisters of the monastery, and in every detail of the inner domestic economy of the heroine of old romance.

The toilet of the king, and of the king's mistress, and of the celebrated and perennial duchess of fiction who was anybody's mistress, has been painted often on polite canvases, and oftener still in romance not less polite; and we seem to be quite familiar with every process in the mystery, and we are never shocked. But the canvas is a fantasy for the eye, and the novel a fantasy for eye and ear; and the details of the toilet before the era of hygiene are a little impolite, a little difficult in print,—and useful chiefly at this day as a means of tracing the origins of epidemics. I spoke of Flaubert, but I believe the Swift of the Gulliver unbowlderised, and going yet one point nearer to nature, would be necessary to us.

To take, not quite so much at random, one other instance: I know of one book only, in modern French, which has the atmosphere of that forgotten Paris which so many writers of romance have pretended to re-create for us; an atmosphere which chokes at this day. It is a book partly scientific, a book crowned by the Academy of Medicine, a book, therefore, which may be regarded as not intended for the read-

ing of everybody; yet the author is obliged to relegate some of the most significant of his illustrations to the comparative shelter of an appendix.

Observe, again, the particular adroitness with which Victor Hugo evades the difficulty of describing in detail the Paris of the fifteenth century. I refer to the chapter, entitled 'A Bird's-eye View of Paris,' which brings to a close the third book of 'Notre Dame.' Now, a tour through the streets of Paris when Louis XI. was king, Victor Hugo showing the way, would have been a great experience; but it would also have been, in very many respects, an extremely shocking one. What does Hugo do? He says nothing as to the state of the streets, but discreetly hinting that there is a very fine view to be had from the towers of Notre Dame, he carries the reader forthwith to that chaste altitude. Once there, all is safe.

I cannot but think, indeed, that even from the cathedral top a very ordinary nostril would have been aware of the celebrated smell of mediæval Paris; but M. Hugo has very resolutely stopped his nose, and readers whom that rich romance has charmed a score of times pass under his spell again as he surveys for them the innumerable congregation of the gothic roofs, the hanging turrets at the angles of the city walls, the pointed gables, the clustered

towers of palace, church, and donjon, the great gates, the bridges piled with dwellings, the carved and painted house-fronts with projecting storeys;—all that labyrinth of the external art of a capital already vast in its dimensions. Nothing could be more imposing—as a bird's-eye view.

To descend from the pinnacle, and (leaving M. Hugo to go on with the story of Esmeralda) to start out a-foot through the city is, however, to begin at once a miserable process of disenchantment.

Old chroniclers have derived Lutetia, the name by which Paris was first known, from *Lutum*, mud. The etymology is inexact, but the chroniclers thought otherwise, and the mud was always there to bear them out. During eleven centuries scarcely anyone in authority bestowed a thought upon the dreadful condition of the streets. Now and again some energetic provost declared for purging them, but no assistance could he get. Paris immersed in mud was not ashamed. The unpaved streets, rough as a woodland track, had no proper slope, no course for the waste waters from the houses, which made their own channels, and settled into stagnant pools wherever they were checked. Citizens on foot were avoiding at one moment pits or mounds of a quite indescribable character, and at another contesting the way

with the pigs, dogs, geese, ducks, and rabbits which swarmed around the pools and gutters.

In 1131, the heir to the throne, Philippe, son of Louis le Gros, riding through the Rue St. Jean, was thrown by an abbot's pig, and died from his injuries. During the snows, rains, or frosts of winter the narrow streets were impossible for carts (as for carriages, there were none whatever), and in summer these same streets exhaled an odour which rose above the house-tops and spread itself beyond the farthest environs. It was said that, on the darkest night of the year, the traveller out of his course might know by the scent whether he were within a league or two leagues of Paris.

Within the walls, a few fine houses surprised by their solidity and height, but Paris in general was still a winding maze of huts.

In 1185, Philippe-Auguste, standing at an open window of the palace, observed a cart fast by the wheels in the swamp that passed for a royal thoroughfare, and sickened of the stench. He gave an order forthwith for the paving of the city, but as the work was to be done at the people's expense, his majesty offering only a very slender contribution, it was abandoned some little while before it was properly begun. The commissioners of ways and thoroughfares appointed to conduct the enterprise got no

further than a general blackmailing of the smaller kinds of street merchants, whose booths and stalls were threatened;—a bundle of straw from one, a pound or two of candles from another, a cheese from a third, a goose from the poulterer, a cake from the pastryman, a pair of boots from the boot-maker, and so forth.

In the interests of the paving of Paris, which continued unpaved, they levied a tax upon duellists, one portion to be paid on the day of challenge, and the remainder when the place of combat had been chosen. Henceforth, no new street should be begun, nor the line of any street altered, until the commissioners' commission had been agreed upon; but all this was barren of result, and, as before, the normal aspect of Paris gave the chroniclers to think that Lutetia must certainly be derived from *Lutum*.

During many centuries of French history, as a witty historian has observed, laws of every kind can be regarded only as 'des aspirations plus ou moins platoniques de l'autorité vers un meilleur état social.' Wars, seditions, rebellions, the conflicts of authorities imperfectly defined and always jealous of each other, and the utter unwillingness of the people to submit themselves to sanitary regulations which they were incapable of understanding, rendered progress in this direction the most forlorn

of hopes. Authority goes on periodically and placidly renewing its injunctions, and nobody dreams of obeying them.

In the middle of the fourteenth century (1348) a new ordinance insisted that the streets must be regularly cleansed and swept, that the inhabitants must keep the fronts of their houses decent (which were habitually disfigured in a manner past all rendering in English), and that pigs must be denied the public ways. Abbots and priors were especially privileged to let their swine feed in the streets of Paris, but the new decree enjoined upon the sergeants of the Châtelet to kill at sight even the pigs of the Church. The heads they might keep, the carcases they were to carry to the hospitals. This decree had no kinder fate, however, than its predecessors; yet Paris was not without warnings. The leper was always within her gates, and the plague burst at last.

The earliest visitation of marked severity was in the year of this abortive edict of 1348, and during eighteen months it sowed terror through the careless city. At its height, the panic was such that they said if you did but look at a victim you would be smitten within the day. The king called upon his faculty of medicine for a remedy; the faculty had none to offer, but, 'après de longues discussions,'

they sent to inform his majesty that the plague was the result of a hostile conjunction of the planets Mars and Jupiter. Fear exaggerated the numbers of the dead. Of every twenty souls in Paris, says one, eighteen were taken; one hundred a day, says a second, and 'altogether eighty thousand in Paris,' a third. Yet, when the plague was stayed, Paris was as insouciant as before. Early in the fifteenth century, Charles VI. declared it a marvel that the whole town was not dead from drinking the water of the Seine (but of this, since the taverns were not lacking custom, it is probable that less was imbibed than the king supposed), yet the dwellers on both banks of the river went on adding their slops to that poisoned flood.

The plague returned. In 1418 it slew so many of the population that masses for the dead were scarcely to be purchased, and the grave-diggers are said to have buried one hundred thousand victims between the festivals of the Nativity and the Conception of the Virgin. In 1427, 1433, 1438, and 1445 the pest renewed itself; and five years later, in 1450, the deaths in a space of eight weeks are declared to have reached the incredible number of forty thousand. Still, what but this could happen in a city which had an open sewer bubbling through

its centre? Not a sewer was arched in Paris till the beginning of the seventeenth century.

During the first quarter of the sixteenth—1500, 1510, 1516, 1519, 1522, and 1530—epidemic succeeded epidemic. In 1522, four doctors, consulted as experts, asserted on oath that not a single street in the town was free from the taint of plague. Parliament decreed that the whole town be scoured, and kept scoured, at the State's cost, and went on to order a tax; but the tax could not be collected, and the town could not be scoured. Year by year a new law was passed, and a way was found to evade it.

In 1531, houses which the plague had touched were to be marked with a cross; and persons who had had the plague, and had recovered from it, or who were deemed likely to have the plague, and *not* to recover from it, were to carry a white wand in the streets. No articles were to be sold out of shops which the pest had breathed upon, and no beggars or pilgrims suspected of leprosy were to be admitted into Paris. Scavengers were to go through the streets twice a day, between seven in the morning and noon, and between two in the afternoon and six, and every householder was to be ready with his refuse when the cart arrived. The police were to en-

force these orders by visits at stated hours to every quarter of the town. But nobody set the police in motion, and nobody was set in motion by the police. The new laws went by the board, as the old ones had done.

After the plague authority was never quite asleep, but it could never draw the town to its support. In the intervals of fighting the plague it turned again to the paving of the streets, but no paving was to be accomplished on any system of taxation. The street of Grenelle-Saint-Honoré was to be paved at the expense of the inhabitants, but when the nuns of the convent of Penitent Women were solicited for their contribution the abbess maintained that the vows of her order involved nothing in the matter of public cleanliness. The clergy of the neighbourhood were appealed to, but they held the abbess in the right; there was no precedent for taxing religion in the interests of sanitation.

Nominal authority, turning this way or that, found itself opposed at every corner. Here you had to deal with some seigneur who stood upon feudal rights which had lapsed with feudality; here again with the chapter of a cathedral which set itself above the ruling of a Pope, and here once more (a power to be wheedled where coercion failed) with the king himself. The king, before the era of ab-

solutism, had no complete prerogative except in a matter of treason, and as a landlord in Paris he stood, in respect of acreage, a good deal lower than several of his subjects. These lesser powers held a power absolute on their own ground in Paris, and years were spent by the officers of the Châtelet in hoaxing, bribing, and fighting them for control of the streets. It was not until 1674—a little longer than two hundred years ago—that Louis XIV. laid them low, and set the authority of the Crown above them all.

But the streets themselves (under whatever control), these streets that showed so finely from the summit of Notre Dame, could scarcely have been rendered proper by any effort of sanitary science. One does not realise at this day the structure of the gothic town, which is never seen at its best except upon paper, or on the canvas of the scene-painter. The streets were not really streets, they were passages; you leaned out of the window to talk with your neighbour opposite, and when a Charles IX., before the memory of the Bartholomew Massacre had made him stupid with melancholy, slipped out at night to jump the roofs with his friends, he had but to clear the breadth of a dyke. This was the street of ancient Paris in its width, and in height it was proportionate; it let in little air, and scarcely any sun.

If the citizens had elected to live by the strictest rules of health, their conditions and surroundings would have been greatly against them; but, in circumstances which built the odds up on the other side, they fought in aid of the enemy—disease. The heaps and hillocks of rotting matter and other abominations, the gaping holes which received contributions of the same description, the pools of filthy water, and the reeking sewer as hideous to the sight as to the smell, made each frequented thoroughfare a separate centre of infection.

The very names of many of the streets, cynical avowals of what the streets themselves were like, are the grossest reading. A list to fill a page might be compiled, but in naked English half the names would set the reader's hair on end. Some are the names of streets which must have been veritable *cloacæ*, others speak significantly of the wretched state of the inhabitants or of their dangerous character, and others proclaim the haunts of the robber, the cut-throat, or the debauchee. It was rare to see a person of the Court, a nobleman, a churchman of rank, a counsellor of parliament, or a wealthy citizen on foot in these unsightly and unseemly thoroughfares, and before coaches came into use, which was not until the period of the Renaissance, ladies went in litters, or rode behind their husbands *en croupe*.

Private dwellings, not merely the poor wooden tenements of citizens of the humbler classes, but the mansions of the wealthy, the great residences of princes, the royal palace itself, and habitations numerously peopled, such as monasteries, colleges, asylums, and even hospitals, were destitute, literally destitute for centuries of sanitary appliances the most ordinary, the most indispensable. In the lighter kinds of histories, the memoirs and collections of anecdotes, this necessitous condition of every household, from the most exalted to the meanest, is often turned to humorous account; but as the humour is so generally scabrous, or tending that way, there is no transplanting it.

One may read in Brantôme, without too much embarrassment, the surprising misadventure of Admiral Bonnivet at the Comtesse de Châteaubriand's, in the chamber to which King Francis had retired; but even in reading, one feels that *out of* Brantôme the legend would never do. Similarly, it is impossible not to laugh, and not to laugh heartily, over certain details of the provost's arrangements for the entry into Paris of Anne of Brittany and her ladies, in 1504; his provision, not of waiting-women but of waiting-men at particular places along the route, and the articles they were instructed to carry,—but here again the veil can be no further lifted. It was a

thoughtful provost, and the act was dictated by a nice consideration—and there let it rest: the sixteenth century is nearly four centuries old.

This famous sixteenth century was, nevertheless, one of the most distressing in the chequered history of Paris. There is a library of volumes on the new birth of art and letters in this era, but throughout it all Paris was struggling against epidemic sickness, and the town was poisoned and poisonous in every quarter. The plague, scotched for a season, broke out afresh. In 1546, Parliament ordered a 'general procession' to 'entreat heaven' to stay the calamity; in 1562, there were deaths to the number of twenty-five thousand; in 1569, the priests would no longer bury the dead, and could scarcely be hired to administer the last sacrament to the dying; in 1580, the hospitals could not find beds enough for the sick; and in 1596, Parliament suspended its sittings, because everyone who could do so must get outside the plague-line.

We have next to consider briefly another terrible factor in the production of this monotonous succession of epidemics: I mean, the customs of burial. The doctors of Paris (of whom, by the way, in the very middle of the sixteenth century, there were not above seventy for the incessant needs of the whole population), for all their pedantry, their rooted faith

in classicism, and the changeless conservatism of their methods, were neither ignorant of nor indifferent to the perennial dangers of the city; and from time to time they raised a voice of warning or of protest.

But the grave question of inhumation, from the point of view of the public health, was scarcely considered by them, and there seems to have been almost no legislation on the subject. The dead were buried, in consequence, wherever it pleased the survivors to lay them. If you had a bit of garden or a courtyard attached to your house, you might make that your private burial-ground; if you had none, you might dig up six feet of the public thoroughfare; or, if it were a better solace to give your dead the shelter of the dwelling he had been used to, there was nothing to prevent you from bestowing him in the cellar. The era of burial in churches or in cemeteries proper came with the finding or the re-discovery of a treatise by St. Augustine, in which the father maintained that the dead derived much satisfaction and benefit from interment in the shadow of some sacred building, or in the near neighbourhood of bones renowned for their sanctity. Hereupon, everyone sought to be buried, if not beneath the flagstones of his favourite church, at least within its pious *umbra*; and so the

cemetery grew up around the more famous temples of Paris.

But since all of these could not, by reason of their situation, give this enlargement to their borders, there was established gradually on the right bank of the Seine (the site of which is at present occupied by the Square of the Innocents) an immense necropolis, which was shared by several parishes. The vicinity of this Cemetery of the Innocents became in time, as may be imagined, one of the most pestilential spots in Paris. Houses were built around it, and immediately overlooking it, which, in any season of epidemic sickness, were invariably the first to be attacked. The authorities, with commendable prudence, had endeavoured from the first to isolate this natural plague-spot, placing it beyond the walls of Paris; but Paris was perpetually overstepping its walls towards every point of the compass, and the huge cemetery was soon hemmed in, to the permanent danger and constant suffering of the whole community.

II.

The seventeenth century dawns, and the situation is scarcely one whit better. At this date the doctors and the police were united in the interests of what

was then regarded as sanitary science, but with the cessation of the plague at any moment the common sense of danger ceased also, and from king to seigneur, from bishop to parish priest, from inspector of highways to the licensed man with the muck-rake, no one would assist. More than this, everyone was in opposition. Paris flatly objected to all proposals, all ordinances that made for cleanliness, and as a proper consequence Paris continued to be the favourite abode of the plague. Charles de Lorine, physician to Louis XIII., invented a costume in which to visit patients whose condition he suspected, and might have been seen ambling through the streets on his mule wrapped in an overcoat of morocco leather, beneath which was a gown steeped in chemicals, great spectacles on his nose, a clove of garlic in his mouth, rue in his nostrils, and incense in his ears.

As for leprosy, all cure of that had been despaired of, and the efforts of the State were confined to isolating the unhappy leper. The dread ceremony, with its solemn elaboration of detail, which attended the decree of perpetual seclusion, was profoundly characteristic of the age. Considered and pronounced to be dead henceforth to the world, it was not unusual, and in some parishes it was the uniform prac-

tice, to rehearse over the living leper the actual service of sepulture.

Persons suspected of the disease were first summoned before a priestly tribunal, and then sent for examination by two or more surgeons. If the surgeons declared it leprosy, the decree of separation was pronounced, and read in the parish church. On the Sunday following, the leper was fetched from his dwelling by a deputation of priests, laid on a bier and covered over with a black cloth, and borne in this manner to the church, the priests chanting the *Libera me.* In the church the bier was placed upon trestles, and the leper lay there and listened to his funeral service; after which the congregation passed before him sprinkling him with holy water, and each bestowed on him an alms. The office of the dead being completed, another funeral procession was formed, and with the cross going on in front the leper was carried to the hovel where he must live, untended and unvisited, till the worm claimed him. Gloves, clappers, and a bread-bowl were given him by the priest, who cast over the hut a handful of earth from the cemetery, and the *De profundis* was sung.

'Dead to the world, be thou alive again to God!' said the priest.

Then, bidding him remember that the church

would be ever mindful of him in her prayers, the priest went on to pronounce sentence of deprivation:—

'I forbid thee to enter any church or monastery, any mill, bake-house, or market, or any place in which there is a concourse of people.

'I forbid thee to walk with naked feet, or to go out of thy dwelling without thy leper's garment and thy clappers.

'I forbid thee to wash either thyself or anything thou hast in any river, stream, or fountain. What water thou needest, fill it into thy barrel with a bowl.

'I forbid thee to touch anything thou art bargaining for until thou hast bought it.

'I forbid thee to enter any tavern.

'I forbid thee, if thou art spoken to in the streets, to make any answer until thou hast observed the direction of the wind.

'I forbid thee to walk in narrow streets.

'I forbid thee to touch the well or the cord of the well with ungloved hands.

'I forbid thee to touch or to give anything to children.

'I forbid thee to eat or drink in any company save that of lepers like thyself.

'And I bid thee know that when thou diest thy

body shall be buried in this cabin, and not in holy ground.'

This tremendous sentence being uttered, the priest planted a wooden cross before the door and hung on it a box for alms; and the leper was left alone.

Persons afflicted with leprosy in districts which had a leper-hospital were sent there. The principal lazar-house in Paris was St. Lazare, which was supplied with bread gratuitously by the bakers of the town, a class who were regarded as peculiarly liable to contract the disease. The great and good Ambroise Paré, the father of medicine in France, admitting that the health of the community required the enforced seclusion of the leper, adds this of Christian charity: 'But when they must be set apart from us, I would have them removed with all kindness and gentleness, bearing in mind that they are of one flesh with us. For, did it please God, we should ourselves be smitten even as they are—nay, it might be yet more grievously. It behoves us, moreover, to admonish them that, being cast out from the world, they cease not to be loved by Him, whiles they bear their cross in patience.'*

* 'Je conseille que lorsqu'on les voudra séparer, on le face le plus doucement et aimablement qu'il sera possible, ayant mémoire qu'ils sont semblables à nous: où il plairoit à Dieu, nous serions touchez de semblable maladie, voire encore plus griefve. Et les

For the inmates of St. Lazare there was no release till death, though in the earlier stages of the disease they were allowed to beg through the streets, shaking their rattles ceaselessly, to let the untainted flee before them. Incredible as it sounds (at least, to all unacquainted with the wiles and the bestial habits of the beggars of old Paris), there were vagabonds who feigned leprosy to procure admission to some lazar-house, where they might live and be fed in idleness,—though leprosy itself was their ultimate and certain penalty.

Before the true nature of the disease was known, and therefore, of course, before the true remedy could be found, leprosy had mysteriously vanished out of France. It was rare during the first half of the seventeenth century, and during the second half it disappeared. Its disappearance owed nothing, assuredly, to any transmutation of the streets of Paris. In 1650, their hygienic state was very much what it had been two centuries earlier. A certain De Beaulieu, instructed to visit the town street by street, and report on its condition, presented a statement which is quite monotonous in its iteration of the sores and blotches of the Paris of the

faut admonester que, combien qu'ils soient séparez du monde, toutesfois ils sont aimez de Dieu, en portans patiemment leur croix.'

seventeenth century,—almost precisely the same as those which Victor Hugo's rhetoric has so skilfully overlaid in the Paris of Louis XI.

In this seventeenth century Paris began really to look like a great capital, yet the Parisians were still fighting their best to make it a place scarcely possible to live in; and with its four-and-twenty sewers, its gutters, dammed at intervals with refuse which the water could not carry; its river, polluted through and through; its butchers' shops, of which front and back were alike strewn and heaped with offal; and its quite unmentionable trenches for the public convenience, the chief town of France was in this well-graced era the most pestiferous, and in its daily aspects the most unsightly, in Europe. It is the town of which, at this date precisely, Corneille sang as 'une île enchantée,'—in a play to which it seems ungallant to add that he gave the name of 'The Liar.'

One may regret, in the retrospective interests of the health of Paris, that Louis XIV. had so little affection for his capital. He preferred to live out of it (which is not wonderful); but if someone with the privilege of the royal ear had shown him the way to live comfortably and elegantly *in* it, Paris would have been both clean and beautiful in that imposing reign. If, for example, as Voltaire has

said, Louis XIV. had employed in finishing and embellishing the Louvre the extravagant sums he laid out upon the useless aqueducts of Maintenon; if he had expended upon his capital the fifth portion of what it cost him to force nature at Versailles, he might have transformed Paris into a monument to his name and genius more enduring than any which history has succeeded in raising to them.

Nevertheless, during the reign of Louis XIV., Paris was growing worthier of its renown among the capitals of Europe. This was owing principally to the efforts of an intelligent chief of police, La Reynie, who, in spite of the unfailing opposition of the nobles and ill-will of the bourgeoisie, effected changes innumerable. He fetched stone by water from Fontainebleau and compelled the householders to do their share of paving. He set up fountains and built new quays along the Seine. He threw down the slovenly booths in the principal streets and banished from them the more disreputable class of hawkers. He suppressed the sloping projections of the shops and curtailed the ridiculous dimensions of their signboards. He drew out new plans for building and allowed no houses to be raised above a certain height.

Voltaire, in his 'Siècle de Louis XIV.,' says that the Paris of this era (which contained about half a

million inhabitants) was 'embellished with a thousand splendid and commodious edifices,' but M. Franklin, a safer guide in such a matter, maintains that in reality they were neither splendid nor commodious, exception being made in favour of 'certain palaces and certain sumptuous residences.' The absolutism of Louis XIV. and his passion for regularity and symmetry were reflected even in the architecture of private dwellings of the period, which, in M. Franklin's estimate, 'lost all individual character.' Rooms in houses of the upper classes were, however, large and lofty, and during the summer months both pleasant and salubrious.

The vigilant La Reynie and his men carried their raid into every quarter of the town, and bagged on one occasion no less important a victim than Corneille himself, who, while composing the praises of the 'île enchantée,' had neglected to keep his doorstep clean. Things were coming to a pass in Paris when a tragic poet must break off in a verse to look to the state of his door-step. It was La Reynie, in a word, (on the satisfactory showing of M. Franklin,) who began to remove from Paris the reproach under which it had lain for centuries as 'un cloaque infect et malsain.'

Still, it was better as yet only by comparison with what had been. The tour of Paris could not

have been made with any degree of comfort during any year of the great Louis' reign, which was not ended until 1715. The mud remained to defy the efforts of La Reynie. This mud of Paris was of a most ancient and abhorred celebrity, as history, satire, and fable will declare. Montaigne, who exclaims against its 'bitter odour,' is surpassed on the same subject by Boileau, to whose sixteenth century satire (composed towards the end of the seventeenth century) the reader may refer. Its odour, moreover, was not its sole distinction. 'It sticks like Paris mud' was a proverb of a high antiquity, and current after the beginning of this century. If your clothes were stained with it you must, they said, cut the piece out; 'it burns whatever it touches.'

La Reynie did not despair of ridding the town of mud, but he failed to cure the Paris chambermaid of her inveterate habit of sousing pedestrians with the contents of her pail. The practice was as old as blood-letting or bell-ringing, and, being universal in the town, it contributed in an eminent degree to the perils of every street at every hour of the day. '*Gare l'eau!*—'Ware water!' was the cry, and up went the window-sash. If you were passing at the moment, your only chance was to spring to the wall, pin your back against it, and wait until the aromatic flood had fallen. No one abroad was safe, for

on this side or on that the deluge was incessant, and as the 'sacramental words' were uttered, the pail distilled. How many gallants of old Paris, setting out in their bravest to visit or to serenade a mistress, went home again unsatisfied and soaked! In Scarron's 'Don Japhet d'Arménie,' Japhet is in a reverie under the balcony of his lady when—

Une Duègne . . . La nuit est fort obscure.
Gare l'eau!
Don Japhet Gare l'eau! Bon Dieu, la pourriture!
Ce dernier accident ne promet rien de bon.
. . . . . .
La Duègne Gare l'eau!
Don Japhet La diablesse a redoublé la dose.
Exécrable guenon, si c'estoit de l'eau rose
On la pourroit souffrir par la grand froid qu'il fait,
Mais je suis tout couvert de ton deluge infect.

The Léandre of Molière's 'L'Etourdi' gets the same benison from Trufaldin, as he is preparing to carry off Célie. It is much to a nation's advantage to have the trick of discovering a jest in the little infelicities of life, and this advantage the French have possessed over most of the nations of Europe. Indeed, did not they turn the guillotine of Dr. Guillotin into very decent comic verse? On the other hand, their acquiescence in the pail is signifi-

cant in a manner. It was a public nuisance which the public voice might at any time have suppressed, but it went unchecked for hundreds of years. If a custom were tolerated which must have ruined more suits of clothes in Paris than any war which France had ever undertaken, is it surprising that the science and practice of hygiene progressed so slowly? It was annoying to be perpetually on the alert for the '*Gare l'eau!*' of the chambermaid, the duenna, or the suspicious father; but the average citizen perceived nothing offensive, either to morals or to health, in the use of the window as a common sink. It is an illustration of the perfect insouciance of Paris upon the whole question; and La Reynie, much as he effected in matters not of the greatest, was fishing in the air.

Chief of police as he was, he could not keep the approaches to the Palais de Justice, or Law Courts, free from those feculent encumbrances which a commissioner of sewers, in a private report, finds it difficult to describe in decent language; and he could do little more for the royal residences of Paris and the suburbs. The Louvre, in its courts, its corridors, and its stairways, 'presents a hideous spectacle,' and 'il en était de même,' says M. Franklin, 'dans les châteaux de St. Germain, de Vincennes, et de Fontainebleau.' In respect of Fontainebleau,

he makes allusion to a letter of the Princess Palatine to the Electress of Hanover, of which he says, 'It would be impossible to quote one single line.' At about the same date, which brings the seventeenth century to a close, there is a long and detailed report to Louis XIV. upon the condition of the Louvre, which, if it could be imagined as written at this day of Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle, would keep the newspaper press in head-lines for a month. The object of the writer was very humbly to suggest to the king a contrivance such as no builder at the present day would omit from a labourer's cottage. The fate of the report, whether or no it were ever acted upon, is not known.

The eighteenth century is in its nineteenth year, when the Princess Palatine, a correspondent whose pen knows nothing of embarrassment, in another letter on the state of Paris, describes it as a 'horrible place; stifling hot, and such a stench! The smell of the streets is all but insupportable, and what with this and the frightful heat, all the meat and fish are going bad.' The rest of the letter must be read in the French. The Princess, going in her chariot, would be safe from the chambermaid's salvo, but that was as effective as ever upon the unprotected. Let Le Sage follow Scarron and Molière, for the

Madrid of 'Gil Blas' is Paris in the eighteenth century.

'I could not leave the house before night,' (says the hero,) 'which, for my sins, was extremely dark; and as I groped along the street, and had got about half way to the place of rendezvous, I was crowned, from the window, with the contents of a perfuming-pan, that did not at all delight my sense of smell; though I may safely say I lost none of it, so exactly was I equipped.'

This was written about 1715. If a gentleman were accompanied in the street by a lady, he must always yield her the *haut du pavé*, the side bordering the houses, where, by shaving the wall, she might perhaps escape. In itself, however, the *haut du pavé* was not nice walking, for reasons which may be found rather nakedly stated in Sterne's 'Sentimental Journey.'

The scavenger's cart was another of the trials of the street. Swaying from side to side through those uneven lanes—man, horse, and cart as black as the liquid contents of the tumbril—it distributed in detail, says Franklin, what it had gathered in the gross; and woe to any who were passing when it lodged in a rut. The increase in traffic of all kinds had greatly enhanced the discomforts of the streets, most of which were still as narrow as in the fifteenth

century, and all of which were without footways. The footway or sidewalk, an English importation, was not constructed in Paris until within a few years of the Revolution, and even under the first Empire it was quite a rare convenience.

The state of the Seine, impregnated with the varied detritus it received, was as bad as it had ever been.; yet the water-carriers continued to draw from it the drinking-water of Paris. The supply brought into the town by the three or four aqueducts gave to each individual scarcely more than two quarts a day.

The soil of the churches was literally sown with corpses, and the dead in the cemeteries lay in swathes.

The hospitals, 'sinister asylums, loathed and dreaded by the people,' were perhaps, of all institutions in the town, the most insanitary and the most abominable. Voltaire, writing from Ferney to Dr. Paulet on the condition of the Hôtel-Dieu, says:—'You have in Paris a Hôtel-Dieu where eternal contagion reigns, where the sick, heaped all together, received from and inflict on one another reciprocal disease and death. You have slaughter-houses in back streets with no issue, which give out in summer a cadaverous odour capable of poisoning an entire quarter. The exhalations of the dead slay the living

in your churches, and the charnel-yard of the Innocents is a witness at this day of a degree of barbarism that degrades us below the Hottentot and the negro.' Lest this should seem in any way exaggerated, let me hasten to add that it is far outstripped by the horrors revealed in the exhaustive report of Tenon on the Hôtel-Dieu, which was printed in 1788, *par ordre du roi.*

THE TOILET

I.

THE early Church, surveying the fruits of Paganism, found that washing did not make for sanctity. The luxurious Roman, with his luxurious baths and highly scientific ablutions, was never an ideal of the monk; and, since the splendid Thermæ were a principal expression of the refined sensuality of the age, the Church, which was seldom too well served by its logicians, passed easily to the conclusion that washing was a snare of Sathanus. Hence its peculiar attitude on the subject of personal cleanliness. With the contempt of cleanliness was associated an equal contempt of the body, and these sentiments, allied to a fanatical and almost ferocious veneration of virginity, produced in time such repulsive types of the devotee as St. Abraham the hermit, who, living for fifty years after his conversion, rigidly refused

from that date, says Mr. Lecky,* to wash either his face or his feet; the famous virgin, Silvia, who declined, 'on religious principles, to wash any part of her body except her fingers;' St. Macarius of Alexandria, who 'slept in a marsh, and exposed his naked body to the stings of venomous flies;' St. Ammon, who 'had never seen himself naked;' St. Simeon Stylites, who stood upon one leg for a whole year, the other leg being 'covered with hideous ulcers;' and the one hundred and thirty nuns of St. Euphraxia's convent, who 'shuddered at the mention of a bath.'

These terrible models of religion continued in honour through all the feudal ages, when (to quote Mr. Lecky again) 'the cleanliness of the body was regarded as a pollution of the soul, and the saints who were most admired had become one hideous mass of clotted filth.'

The ideal of the Church in mediæval France was not quite so deplorable as this, but it was bad enough; in all cloisters, says M. Franklin, cleanliness was considered 'a dangerous practice, a culpable vanity, a sin;' and, as a very natural consequence, the monk was seldom in the tub. He had little option in the matter, for the rule in most monasteries was,

* 'History of European Morals.'

two baths a year: at Christmas and at Easter. St. Benoît's canon on the subject (and he was held for a Radical) was, that 'baths are permitted to the sick as often as their sickness requires; but among the healthy, and, above all, among the young and vigorous, they are to be used very sparingly.' The rule was framed, not for the general community, but for the monks. A commentator of some distinction in his day, Dom Calmet, discusses it from a philosophic standpoint, on the ground that it would have been 'cruel' to refuse the monks one bath or two baths in the year. He says, in effect, a bath now and then was really necessary to them, inasmuch as, wearing no linen, sleeping in their woollen habits, and changing them 'peu souvent,' they were 'apt to contract a good deal of dirt,' which was not only 'highly inconvenient to the individual,' ('très-incommode aux particuliers,') but 'particularly unpleasant to the persons he mixed with.' In Dom Calmet's day an important concession had been obtained. The woollen shirt had been replaced by a shirt of serge, which was sent to the laundry once a fortnight. The wearer, however, was still restricted to his two visits in the year.

The monks, it seems, were at no pains to infringe their regulations; and if a sense of duty counselled a brother to forego his cleansing at Christmas or at

Easter, it was still counted to him for righteousness. The two baths a year were not an article of the faith, but a concession to the flesh.

The statutory toilet of the monastery was like the ablutions of a tourist who slips out of the night-express at sunrise for a dash of water at the tap of a wayside station. The rule of Cluni ordered the monks to assemble in the cloisters, where three towels were reserved for their use; one for the novices, another for those who had taken the vows, and the third for the lay brethren. Whether the Benedictines were specially favoured I cannot say, but Dom Calmet observes that 'Each had his comb;' and adds, 'they combed themselves, and washed their heads and faces with some frequency.' In another passage the commentator is more explicit: the monks who shaved the head, leaving only a narrow circle of hair, washed their heads 'every Saturday.' The superior clergy, including the bishops, were so little to be trusted in the matter of personal propriety that it was necessary to instruct them to use the comb before they ascended the altar.

The case was no better in the convents. No nun of the middle ages, revisiting the glimpses of the moon, would recognise the fair and cleanly penitents who haunt the pages of romance. She would say severely: 'They are too much washed.' For the

devout sister, cherishing her vows, frowned on the tub, and lightly laid to her face the moistened corner of a towel. It is certain, none the less, that at one period her cheeks were not innocent of rouge, and that the employment of the patch was designed to lend the skin a whiteness which it had not owed to soap and water. Perhaps the nun of fiction is the nicer of the two. She, at least, was never known to rouge herself, and the novelist would be flouted who presented her with patches.

As late as the close of the seventeenth century, the Duchesse de Mazarin, withdrawn among the Visitandines of the Rue Saint Antoine, sought leave one day for a foot-bath. The whole convent, says M. Franklin, was struck with consternation ('la maison entière s'en émut,') and 'the indiscretion of the duchess' was tartly reproved. Madame nevertheless insisted on her foot-bath, if the convent should drown for it; which result, it seems, was narrowly avoided, for she filled to overflowing 'un grand coffre' in the dormitory, and 'tout cela finit par une inondation générale.' The Duchesse's foot-bath long remained a painful tradition of the Visitandines.

Quitting the dusky and malodorous seats of religion, it is agreeable to note that where piety was less pronounced washing was much more plentiful. The middle ages in France were cleaner on the whole than has

been supposed. Two baths a year, with an occasional lapse into the foot-bath, might be the regimen of the saints in cloisters; but beyond the pale of the Church, rancidity was not associated with regeneration. Dulaure, among the historians of Paris, states that there were baths in almost every street. M. Franklin shows that they were, at all events, scattered up and down the town in considerable numbers; a proof in itself that they were places of popular resort. The cold bath (with which the Roman always finished his nice ablutions) was not in great esteem, although baths in the Seine were arranged for both sexes. The hot bath and the vapour bath, on the other hand, were in demand at all hours of the day and night, and it was usual to cry them in the streets at or before sunrise. So general, indeed, was the habit of frequenting the *étuves*, that the authorities took precautions to prevent them from being closed in seasons when fuel was scarce, and to this end the prices of admission were raised in the pinch of winter. The baths were shut only on Sundays and holidays. Persons preparing for a journey were accustomed to sleep at the *étuve* the night before they started, and thither also would the voyager repair on his return to Paris.

So far as concerned the care of the body, all this was an excellent example to the swinish monks: un-

fortunately, quite early in its history, the bath began to be reputed a place where more care was given to the persons than to the morals of its patrons. The bath-keepers were instructed to choose among their fraternity 'three prudent men' who would take an oath before the provost to denounce any establishment of notorious ill-fame, and at the same time it was sought to restrain customers of either sex from visiting the baths after a certain hour of the evening; but once the name of the *étuve* was tainted, the place itself seemed eager to live up to, or down to, its renown. One presumes that there were exceptions at all times, and that the client who paid his franc or his two francs with a simple view to washing would generally know what door to knock at; but the truth seems to be, that in many if not in most of these houses, the bath befriended the assignation. This was not difficult in establishments which were open to the reception of both sexes. Bath and *bagnio*, at all events, came to have one and the same meaning; and towards the sixteenth century it began to be at the risk of reputation that one stepped from home to be cleansed. It might be ventured in the morning, but there was a hazard in it after curfew. The Church, which had established long ere this its fixed principle of the vanity of washing, and which had almost made it a

canon that no one could go clean into Paradise, was the first to demand the closing of the baths.

They were never closed, however, by any edict of Church or State. During three centuries, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth, they were maintained by the middle-classes, who had no baths in their own houses, and by all the gallants of the town, who had a double use for them. But in the sixteenth century their name had grown too bad for the support of either order; and when the Huguenot clergy had joined sides with the priests, and from all pulpits they were denounced as 'places of perdition,' they began at last to lose custom, they lost it then very rapidly, and in a short time there was scarcely an *étuve* in Paris.

What the purist gained here, the rest of society forfeited; for when the habit of the public bath was relinquished, washing went out of fashion; and the Church's monoply of dirt was lost to it for centuries.

Alas that one should come to know it! queens, and such charming ones, were no nicer in their persons than less interesting folk. I blush in writing it, but Lamb's observation—'Martin, if dirt were trumps, what hands you would hold!'—might have been addressed, if not with perfect propriety, at least with perfect truth, to fair and witty Margaret of

Navarre. Nay, it is her Majesty herself who, in the frankest way, makes the avowal to her lover.

'Look at these lovely hands of mine; they have not been washed for eight days, yet I will wager they outshine yours.'

Not a notion in the mind of either that there was any ugliness in hands eight days unwashed, but consider what it meant; for at that era there were no forks at table, and fine ladies and gentlemen ate with their fingers; and no one used a pocket-handkerchief, for there were no pocket-handkerchiefs to use. The fork was not of universal adoption in France until the eighteenth century, and the question of the pocket-handkerchief was not completely settled at the date of the Revolution. Manuals of behaviour were at pains to instruct the fashionable that they must not employ as a handkerchief the hand which was placed in the dish at table; the use of the other for that purpose seems to have been unrestricted. The case standing thus, what must the hands have resembled which had gone eight days unwashed! and if a queen as charming, as elegant and as intelligent as Margaret of Navarre were so little delicate, how was it with the rank and file of society? Perhaps the lesser people were nicer than their betters, for crabbed d'Aubigné, in a passage in the 'Adventures du Baron de Fœneste,' allows

the reader to infer that a noble might be recognised not more by his attire than by the odour he exhaled!

As fashion grew more elaborate, personal propriety suffered greater and greater violation. When, for example, the practice of powdering the hair was adopted, and heads were washed no oftener than before, their condition went beyond description. It must suffice to say that the fashion-books of the period are detailed in their advice as to the best ways of stilling or killing the nameless parasite (which troubled the sleep of Louis XIV.), and that fine ladies in company were wont to use goads or prods of ivory or silver for the purpose of allaying, in their be-powdered and be-plastered *coiffures*, that which Sydney Smith discreetly names cutaneous irritation.

Was ever a Court more gallant to the eye, or more unseemly in its treatment of the person, than this over-vaunted Court of Louis Quatorze, *le roi soleil?* More ostentatiously elegant in manners, or more malodorous? More pragmatical in its conduct of every trivial ceremony, or more intolerably dirty? What explains this rage of perfumes, unguents, essences, on which fortunes were spent, but the desperate endeavour to suppress or counteract the effluvia of the neglected person. These wits, beaux,

pedants and *petits maîtres* of the sparkling scene of Molière, his admirable coquettes, his blue-stockings and his bewitching *intrigantes*,—were they to appear before us as their living models trod the streets of Paris or strutted in the gardens of Versailles, we should wish to interpose 'twixt ourselves and them something more than the space allotted in the play-house.

As Harapha says to poor blind Samson in the prison of Gaza :—

> 'And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.'

The subject is not a sweet one, but we are launched and must adventure.

It is recorded (matter of libel, surely) of a certain head of Eton, that he 'dressed but didn't wash.' Let us see (and afterwards forget) how one might dress without washing at the peerless Court of *le roi soleil*. The authorities are principally the 'Civilités,' the fore-runners of our little fashion-books or manuals of correct behaviour. One of these, first published about 1640, and, I believe, several times reprinted, was the 'Loix de la Galanterie,' or 'Laws of Gallantry,' a celebrated *code du bon ton*. Herein the gallant is advised that he should 'sometimes pay a visit to the bath, to have his body clean;' that he should 'take the trouble to wash his hands every

day;' and that he should wash his face '*almost as often.*' Do not these prescripts speak for themselves, and utter a grievous tale? If I have to learn in the pages of a manual that it is well for me to take a bath now and then, to wash my hands at least once in the day, and my face, say, every two or three days, what is it but that, lacking the voice of the monitor, I might consider myself well washed at the rate of two baths *per annum*, my hands presentable for a week if I dipped them on Sunday, and my face the glass of fashion if I scoured it once a fortnight? The 'Civilité,' or treatise of decorum, is not written without a purpose; it is written to lift the tone of manners and propriety among the classes whose tone of manners and propriety is not quite of the standard of elegance; and where the oracle is emphatic, as in the matter of washing the face almost as often as the hands, the only possible inference is that washing the face was not the common usage of society. When the sage says do this, we are to conclude that not everyone is in the habit of doing it; when he bids us avoid that, we are safe in assuming that the prohibition is needed by somebody.

Thus far, however, we have got upon the way to decency, that, in the age of Louis XIV., it was good form for the man of fashion to wash himself occa-

sionally. But even this must be qualified. Washing—at least, the washing of the face—was a euphemism in the name, a sorry compromise in the act. Listen to J. B. de la Salle in the 'Règles de la Bienséance et de la Civilité Chrétienne,' 'Precepts of Propriety and Christian Civility,' once and for long a very bible of the *beau monde*. It is well, says he, to cleanse the face with a fine towel, in order to remove its impurities; it is less well to wash it with water, which renders the skin too susceptible to cold in winter and to the action of the sun in summer. This suggests a toilet almost as summary as the monk's in the cloistral sty, and it may be added that an edition of J. B. de la Salle bears the date 1782, which is within seven years of the Revolution, and within eighteen of the present century.

Yet the polite world, which consented so easily to this unseemliness of the person, was ceaselessly occupied about its clothes and its adornment. Costume was of capital concern to old France, and fashion was ever upon the wing. As far back as the fourteenth century, the rapid changes of the mode in Paris were observed and satirised by a certain Italian prince; he had portraits painted for his gallery to represent the several nations of Europe, each individual distinguished by his national garb. The Frenchman alone shone naked from the canvas, with

a length of cloth over one arm, to show that the quick vicissitudes of fashion had prevented the artist from learning what was actually the wear. And Montaigne, philosophising two centuries later, remarks that 'our change of fashion is so prompt and sudden, that the inventions of all the tailors in the world cannot furnish out new whim-whams enough to feed our vanity withal.' As has been seen, however, one may be dressed, like the fabled head-master of Eton, with no approximation to cleanliness.

And the ladies? The 'Civilités' are silent concerning the sex, but Marguerite de Navarre has shown her hands unasked; and those were royal hands, and their royal owner was no cipher on a point of elegance. Is the lady-in-waiting more punctilious than her Queen? Is the town more fastidious than the Court? Even more significant, perhaps, than the open confession of Margaret of Navarre, who has never a suspicion that a queen is less a queen for not washing herself, is Madame de Motteville's naive praise of Anne of Austria, the pretty little wife of Louis XIII., that she was always 'clean and very nice in her person' ('propre et fort nette'). Clearly, it was worthy of note in a volume of memoirs, that a French queen in the seventeenth century took the trouble to bathe. But how odd

and impertinent a compliment of that sort would be just now! Imagine the visit of a foreign princess to Ascot or the Opera. The chroniclers of fashion would describe her appearance, her dress, her ornaments, in the newspapers of the next morning, but we should hardly expect to be told that 'the princess seemed perfectly clean.'

It must be concluded that the ladies were not in general more cleanly than the men, since it is impossible to suppose that, if they had had a proper regard for their own persons, they could have endured the company of dirty gallants. Where is the unwashed lover who wins his way with a mistress nice at her toilet?

II.

In the reign of Philippe-Auguste (1180–1223) beards went out of fashion, and the hair was clipped at about the middle of the neck. Under Philippe VI. (1328–1350) and Jean II. (1350–1364) the beard made a timid re-appearance; but Charles V. (1364–1380) and his successors were beardless, with the hair cut short in front and worn somewhat long on the neck. Dating from the reign of Francis I. (1515–1547), the hair was kept close, but full honours were once more accorded to the beard. The king, who had received a face-wound in a tourney, let his

beard grow to hide the scar, and beards were soon the universal mode at Court. The bishops copied the fashion next, and presently most men in Paris had beards trimmed to a point. Just, however, as the mode was at its height, a singular crusade was begun against it by divers metropolitan chapters and parliaments. It lasted long, and was sustained on both sides with an ardour absurdly disproportioned to the absurdity of the cause. The chapters would have nothing to say to bishops with beards, and the bishops would not sacrifice their beards to be received by the chapters. Pierre Lescot, abbé of Glagni and an able architect, on whose designs the old Louvre was built, being appointed a canon of Notre Dame, could scarcely get himself installed, 'because of the inordinate length of his beard.' The question, to wear or not to wear a beard, was thought grave enough for discussion by the Sorbonne, and in July 1581 (according to Dulaure) the learned heads of that great faculty issued a decree in Latin, denouncing the beard as 'contrary to modesty, which should be the first virtue of a theologian.'

The parliament of Paris, which had approved the Bartholomew Massacre, totally disapproved of beards; and its presidents and counsellors persisted in shaving their chins while the Court and the rest

of the town went 'bearded like the pard.' Parliament, like the Sorbonne, gave forth an edict: woe to the advocate who carried a beard to the bar, to plead a cause; Parliament would not hear him. François Olivier, presenting himself there to be received as Master of Requests, could not even get an audience till he had despoiled his chin. In June, 1548, (the year after the death of Francis I.,) one Antoine Doré, a Benedictine monk, had the hardihood to present himself in the great hall of Parliament, 'wearing a long beard and a frilled shirt.' He was promptly had before the bar, examined and cross-examined; and in due course he found himself solemnly condemned 'to be returned to the monastery of St.-Martin-in-the-Fields in this town of Paris, there to be shaved and rendered decent, as the principles and practice of religion require; and never again, on pain of prison, to exhibit himself in so unseemly and irregular a guise.' Between 1530 and 1576, a period in which France had her share of troubles, no fewer than eight separate volumes in Latin were composed to settle the portentous question, whether chins should be fringed or smooth.

Louis XIII. mounted the throne (in 1610) with a full moustache and a slight 'imperial' on the lower lip, but a sudden caprice of the inept monarch gave a new turn to fashion. With none of the virile

tastes of his father, Henri IV., (Ravaillac's victim,) Louis XIII. had a variety of small accomplishments. He was something of a cook (though nothing of a *gourmet*), and is said to have larded a fowl to perfection; he trained birds, and prided himself on his gardening; he composed a little, painted a little, and did a little fancy-work in wood and leather. It occurred to him one day to turn barber. He called his courtiers together, and shaved them all. The great Richelieu, with whom one did not trifle in this fashion, was the only man at Court who kept his formidable moustaches and imperial.

After Louis XIII. no French king wore a beard, but the moustache was soon again in favour, and the swash-buckler of the middle seventeenth century is said to have displayed as many as six on each side of the face. During the first part of his reign Louis XIV. showed a thin elegant line on the upper lip, then it disappeared, and all good courtiers went straightway to the barber. The later portraits of Corneille and Molière show not a hair on the face. Plain characters not mingling with the Court did as it liked them.

The age of Louis Quatorze is the age of the peruke. The use of false hair in other fashions was much earlier, for we have the Fathers of the Church and the preachers of the middle ages (who took a

licence in the pulpit which our own age has not ventured to imitate), scolding the women who decked their heads with 'tresses stolen from the dead, from those who perchance are wasting in the fires of hell;' and in the reign of Louis XII. the two sexes were equally to blame in the matter. Louis XIII., who lost his own hair at thirty years of age, set the fashion of the peruke, but it was in the succeeding reign that this curious mode attained its glory. Yet Louis XIV. was thirty-five before he could be induced to patronise the wig-makers. His own hair was abundant and comely, and rather than let it fall to the barber he had his peruke adapted to it; the natural hair showed through meshes of the wig. His perruquier was Binet, quite an artist in his craft, who gave his name to the peruke called *binette*, a term which came to signify, in the slang of Paris, the head itself. Louis had a chamber full of wigs at Versailles, the *cabinet des perruques du roi*, and put on a fresh one for chapel, for hunting, for resting indoors, and for receiving the visits of ambassadors. His barber rarely quitted the Court, and was one of the five hundred persons who had the privilege of dining at the royal board. Louis, whose skin was delicate, shaved only on alternate days.

From this reign, the industry of the perruquier

consumed an incredible quantity of hair. Heads living and dead were placed under contribution, says M. Franklin, in the four quarters of the globe; and the minister Colbert was disposed to check the importation, which would end, he thought, by ruining France. But the perruquiers were better economists than the minister, for the statistics which they presented to him showed conclusively that the sale of perukes to foreign customers brought into France more money than went out of it in the purchase of hair. In truth, the French wig-maker never had a rival; and from England, Germany, Spain, and Italy there was a steady demand for his creations. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were about fifty wholesale hair-merchants in Paris alone, and towards the close of the reign of Louis XIV. the commodity was already so scarce, notwithstanding that the dealers had their agents in the remotest countries, that horse-hair was used for perukes of the commoner kinds.

The varieties of the peruke were extraordinary. It was at its most majestic under Louis XIV., when the *royale*, or *in-folio*, a form reserved exclusively for the aristocracy, was fitter, says a eulogist of the present day, to crown a statue than to be flattened on the head of a mere man. But the peruke, sym-

bol of an absolute monarchy, waned in dignity with the power of the throne. It was in its decline under Louis XV.; the superb *royale* began to shrink, and its colossal proportions were never afterwards restored to it. For all this, the middle of the eighteenth century was distinguished, among other works of note, by forty-five varieties of wigs, each owning a style and name of its own; though it may have tasked the judgment of an expert to distinguish the 'Musketeer' from the 'Cavalier,' the 'Adorable' from the 'Inconstant,' the 'Lunatic' from the 'Prudent,' the 'Pigeon's-Wing' from the 'Port Mahon,' the 'Dragon' from the 'Cornet,' the 'New Mode' from the 'Soonest Made,' or the 'Economic' from the 'Envious.' Certain classes, nevertheless, were conservative in their perukes; that of the abbé underwent little change, and the doctor and apothecary remained faithful to the three-hammer pattern. Under Louis XVI. all Paris was be-wigged; nobles, commoners, every profession, trade and calling, and every age between the cradle and the crutch. The merest lacquey, says M. Franklin, would have been ashamed to show himself 'avec ses propres cheveux,' and the form of the wig proclaimed the quality of the wearer.

From the peruke arose another fashion, that of remaining uncovered in company. Formerly it was

rare for men to remove their hats, even at table or in the drawing-room, except for the purpose of the salute; but when heads were loaded with false hair, hats lost their proper office, and the *tricorne*, or three-cornered, took the name of *chapeau de bras*, from the custom of carrying it between the arm and the side. Antoine de Courtin, writing in 1675, observes that it is 'polite to have the head uncovered in the drawing-room or antechamber;' but the old practice seems to have obtained at the dinner-table, for, as late as 1782, J. B. de la Salle distinctly states that it is 'contrary to good behaviour to remove the hat at dinner, unless in the presence of a guest to whom special honours are to be accorded.' Up to the Revolution, in short, it was as much an act of familiarity for a gentleman to sit at table with his head bare as it would be now for him to take his seat with his hat on. With or without the hat, the salute in old France was punctilious to a degree. Properly to accost a nobleman in the street, the body bent double, the hat sweeping the ground, the hand itself touching the earth, was an art which gave significant expression to the power of birth at that era over every rank and grade inferior.

A word may follow here on the *mouche*, patch, or beauty-spot, a fashion to the full as ridiculous as the peruke. Everyone knows that the patch was a

morsel of black silk gummed on the face, but not everyone is aware of its origin. It was the custom in the sixteenth century, says a modern commentator, to cure tooth-ache by applying to the temples little plaisters spread on silk or velvet; and, he argues, the coquette would be quick to observe the effect of the black patch in enhancing the whiteness of the skin. Whatever the result to the raging tooth, there could be no doubt about the success of the plaister as an aid to the toilet; and in this manner, it seems likely enough, the mode may have arisen. It overran the whole of French society in an astonishingly short time, the clergy not excepted, for a mazarinade of 1649 threatens with the wrath of heaven the 'curled and powdered abbés, whose faces are covered with patches.'

Under Louis XV. every lady carried in her pocket a little box of silver, ivory, or mother-of-pearl, which contained a mirror, some rouge, and a supply of patches. There were the square patch, the round patch, and the oval patch, the star-shaped, heart-shaped, and cross-shaped patch, and even the patch in the form of a bird or animal. Each had, moreover, its proper name. Placed near the eye, it was the 'passionate;' on the forehead, the 'majestic;' on the lips, the 'coquette;' at the corner of the mouth, the 'kiss;' on the nose, the 'impertinent;'

in the centre of the cheek, the 'galante;' on the lower lip, the 'discreet.'

The uncleanly habit of powdering the hair came in with the use of the patch. Henri III., whose memory is one of the nightmares of French history, went about the streets of Paris 'painted like an old coquette,' his hair smothered in scented powder. Louis XIV. detested the practice, to which, however, he gave in rather late in life. The manufacture of powder for the hair was a monopoly of the glovers, who must have made well by it, for the consumption during two centuries was such that, as philanthropic persons observed, the same quantity of flour would have maintained 'ten thousand unfortunates.'

As far back as the fifteenth century the lady of fashion had her *coiffeuse*, or female hair-dresser, whose services were hired for special occasions, such as a wedding or a ball. During the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the *coiffeuse* seems to have held her own, but in the eighteenth she was quite put out of countenance by the male artist, who 'kept his carriage,' and was often a person to be cajoled and conciliated by the great ladies who employed him. To have one's head embellished by the genius who had created the *coiffure* of a duchess of the Court was a distinction

in itself, and ladies of lesser rank, failing in the arts of flattery, had oftentimes recourse to bribery. The *coiffeur* who played his cards well, and was the recipient of secrets and confidences, enriched himself easily, and now and then, as would appear, he stood to his client almost in the relation of confessor. Legros, a ladies' barber of infinite and most entertaining vanity, who asserted that he alone had made hair-dressing a fine art, boasted in inflated prose that he had received 'the plaudits of the Queens and Princesses of every Court,' and of 'toutes les Dames en général.' A talent such as his, he adds, 'gives an added power to the beauty which the poet celebrates;' such skill 'gives assurance and puissance to beauty's empire.'

As each variety of peruke and patch was distinguished by a name, so also were the innumerable varieties of the *coiffure;* and in accordance with the taste of the wearer, or with the authority exercised by her *coiffeur*, the fashionable head was decked *à la Frivolité, à l'Ingénue, à la Harpie, à la Diane, au Caprice, à la Flore, à la Cérès*, or in the manner of the 'Constant Butterfly,' the 'Windmill,' the 'Discreet Witness,' the 'Dove,' the 'Half-Conquest,' the 'Complete Conquest,' the 'Zodiacal,' the 'Kite,' the 'Gondola,' the 'Basket,' the 'Fearless,' the 'Dog Couchant,' or the 'Charms of Liberty.' The list was well-nigh innumerable.

There were degrees of folly in this, but the height and masterpiece of absurdity was the *pouf*, a huge and complicated structure in which various articles were built into the hair, so to speak, to give the head the appearance of a frigate in full sail, a garden with terraces, a fortified castle, a forest, a tomb, the Colosseum at Rome, and heaven knows what besides. To such an excess was this freakish fashion carried that Madame Campan tells us carriages and coaches were not high enough to accommodate the head-gear, and ladies of the Court might be seen driving to a ball with their heads out of window or kneeling on the floor of the conveyance! Doors had to be raised in height to admit the *pouf*, and Marie Antoinette, going to a dance at the Duchesse de Chartres', could not enter the ball-room until the upper tier or story of the edifice she was crowned with had been removed. But the knife of the Revolution was whetting for these foolish heads.

OLD PARIS AT TABLE

I.

THE Paris housewife of the fourteenth century, with purse of reasonable stretch, had a fair choice for her larder. The town had markets, and good ones; and the fish-mart, never easy to provision at a distance from the coast, offered salmon, turbot, brill, soles, plaice, mackerel, sturgeon, whiting, cod, skate, lobster, eels, sardines, mullet, mussels, and whales' tongue. There were recipes for cooking all of these, which a palate trained to the refinements of the modern French *cuisine* would consider rather curious than dainty. If the weather were bad, or the housewife too lazy, or too busy to go to market, she could buy most of what she needed at her own door. Among the cries of old Paris, none were more familiar than those of the

sellers of food, who, with a basket on either arm, or in paniers slung across a nag, hawked through the streets bread, meal, cheese, milk, butter, honey, meat both fresh and salted, fish, poultry, vegetables, fruit, oils and spices, chestnuts from Lombardy and figs from Malta. Corn and flour, as well as wood and water, were carried to the door. But provisions of the best kinds were generally sold in special places; the fish-market for the finest qualities of fish; the *Grande Boucherie* near the Châtelet (the stalls of which, like the crown of France, descended from father to son in one family) for the choicest quality of meat. Roast and baked meats, hot or cold; patés, pies, and all manner of pastry were sold either in shops or on stalls along the streets, in most parts of the town; and the *regrattier*, or 'universal provider,' was already doing business on a considerable scale. When the shops were shut on Saturdays, all or most of the tradespeople carried their goods to the great central market behind the Cemetery of the Innocents. It was not the most savoury spot in Paris, but as all articles were set out here in the open air, the buyer was on more advantageous terms with the seller than when picking and choosing in the owl's light of a shop half-hidden by an enormous signboard and an overhanging story.

The bachelor who was dull when he dined alone could repair to some neighbouring tavern, and the same asylum invited the giver of a feast whose rooms were too narrow for company; but the mediæval inn, even in Paris, was a place of sorry entertainment. If visitors came without warning, and wanted dinner, it was better to send to the nearest *cuisinier* for a pigeon pie, or a goose or sucking pig which could be bought ready for serving.

Except in seasons of excessive dearth, the markets of Paris, the cook-shops, and the provision dealers, were furnished to suit all purses; and the most unhappy periods of the middle ages (to go no farther back than the calamitous reign of Charles VI.) discovered among the Parisians of all classes that zest of good living which was to produce, some centuries later, the finest cookery in the world. In all substantial houses, the kitchen was a chamber of parade; the guest was taken to admire it, as one might take him nowadays to admire the picture-gallery; and the master-cook, on the tall stool from which he surveyed and directed his scullions, sweating under the gigantic chimney, was the father of the *chef* who may aspire, in a London hotel, to the salary of a judge.

But in this age Paris was merely feeding, feeding in a gross and jolly Gargantuan fashion, indoors or out of doors, (breakfast under canvas in the sun is

still a pleasure to seek across the Channel,) feeding with the best of appetites, but without a notion of refinement or of art. The *ragoût* of the fourteenth century, spiced and disguised out of all recognition, survives as a nightmare of the student-cook who will still be digging for inspiration amid the black-letter *livres de cuisine*; but no cook or *chef*, with a place to lose, would send it up to table. The sight of the board spread as it used to be for 'dinner' in the morning or 'supper' in the afternoon, would turn the stomach of a farm-labourer. Think of one enormous earthen dish in the centre, charged to its fullest capacity with fish, meat, poultry and black puddings, and girt with a rampart of vegetables. The entire meal was frequently heaped in this way into a single pot or vessel, into which each guest in turn, or all at once, plunged their naked fists. As for the recipes for special dishes, they make the flesh creep. 'Take eggs in oil,' runs one, 'then almonds, peeled and pounded; mince onions, and after boiling them in water fry them in oil; mix ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and a little saffron steeped in verjuice; put all in the pot and boil.'

An amateur with a practical turn induced his cook to prepare him a duck after the receipt of Taillevent, cook-in-chief to Charles V.

'Observe,' says he, 'that the duck was one of my

own rearing, delicately nurtured, and vowed from infancy to this high experiment. I fed him choicely, hoping that he would one day repay my cares, but his ingratitude, alas! was passing great. Since, however, I had neglected to give him the choice of the sauce he was to be eaten with, I could bear his memory no malice; but I cannot think without a pang of the sufferings of Charles V.'

The sixteenth century arrived. Art and letters, and some of the sciences, were advancing; but *la cuisine* was as unsophisticated as ever, and, through all the Renaissance 'the frightful *salmigondi*' of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, that incredible farrago of incongruous viands, was supreme on the table. Rabelais will tell us what redoutable trencher-ermen the French were at this epoch. The table ordinarily kept in any easy household in Paris might have furnished him with those stupendous lists—running through two chapters of 'Pantagruel'—of 'what the Gastrolaters sacrifice to their ventripotent god.' With the inevitable touch of burlesque, it is Paris at table in the sixteenth century.

'Coming near the Gastrolaters,' says Rabelais, 'I saw they were followed by a great number of fat waiters and tenders, laden with baskets, dossers, hampers, dishes, wallets, pots and kettles.'

At his first course they offer master Gaster, among

other things, six sorts of carbonadoes, nine sorts of fricassees, cold loins of veal, gravy, soup, hotch-pots, marrow-bones, hashes, and beatille pies—with 'eternal drink intermixed.' The fourteen dishes of the second course included chitterlings, hogs' haslets, neats' tongue, chines and peas, brawn heads, powdered venison, puddings and pickled olives; and 'all this associated with sempiternal liquor.' Next they 'housed within his muzzle' a third course of ninety-five separate dishes, beginning with legs of mutton, lumber pies with hot sauce, dwarf-herons and ribs of pork, and finishing with 'dry and wet sweetmeats, seventy-eight sorts,' and cream cheese; and 'perpetuity of soaking with the whole.' On his interlarded fish-days Gaster was coaxed with 'eggs fry'd, beaten, butter'd, poach'd, harden'd, boil'd, broil'd, stew'd, slic'd, roasted in the embers, toss'd in the chimney, &c.,' eighty-seven varieties of fish, from 'swordfish' to shrimps; and a last course of 'rice milk and hasty pudding,' parsnips, stewed prunes, artichokes, water-gruel and chestnuts.

'If, when he had crammed all this down his guttural trap-door,' says Rabelais (I quote throughout from the matchless translation of Urquhart), 'he did not immediately make the fish swim again in his paunch, death would pack him off in a trice. Special

care is taken to antidote his godship with vine-tree sirup.'

Every reader of this greatest of satires (for Rabelais' humanity exalts him far above Swift) will remember the everlasting praise of the bottle; but Rabelais himself, a plain feeder and a water-drinker, had as little sympathy with the 'gastrolatrous hobgoblins' of his time as with the knavish priest and the crooked politician, and his Pantagruel 'did not like this pack of rascally scoundrels, with their manifold kitchen sacrifices,' in whom, nevertheless, the France of that day read its sins of gluttony without a blush.

Prodigious feasting was the rule where the cost was not in question. At the banquet given to Catherine de Medicis by the town of Paris in June, 1549, there were served, amid other delicacies, thirty peacocks, thirty-three pheasants, twenty-one swans, nine cranes, thirty-three egrets, sixty-six turkeys, thirty kids, six hogs, thirty capons, ninety-nine pullets, thirty-three hares, ninety-nine pigeons, ninety-nine turtle-doves, and thirteen geese, a *menu* not ungrateful to Catherine, who was a gross feeder and subject to indigestion. She had brought over cooks from Italy, who began a little to simplify the French cuisine, and who stood high as artists in their own esteem. Montaigne is as humorous as

Lamb in his account of one of them, who held a solemn discourse with him upon the mysteries of his calling.

For all this fine talk the cheer at Catherine de Medicis' court was poor enough, and during the reign of her son, Charles IX., ten years of bad harvests, keeping the country in perpetual dread of famine, gave rise to the first sumptuary laws against extravagant living. Increased consumption in those days did not mean increased production or a larger importation. Commerce was insecure, means of communication were exceedingly defective, and the tiller of the soil was not exactly a free labourer. Accordingly, when famine threatened, the Crown attacked the kitchen. But in France of the sixteenth century, and later, laws which interfered with comfort or with ancient custom were set aside, and the pleasures of the table were not seriously curtailed by the edict of 1563, which made it a civil offence to give your guest a dinner of more than three courses. It is improbable that the host convicted of four courses was often mulcted in the fine of two hundred francs, or his guests in the fine of forty francs apiece, or that the *cuisinier* who supplied the feast was often called upon to undergo the penalty of fifteen days' imprisonment with bread and water, or the severer one (for a third offence) of

whipping and banishment, 'as a person obnoxious to the State.'

Between 1563 and 1639 this edict was renewed some six or eight times, a period of three-quarters of a century, during which Paris seems to have dined with as little restraint as if no such thing as a sumptuary law had ever been invented. The ink was scarcely dry upon the parchment of the first prohibition when Belon wrote that 'au repas d'un simple bourgeois,' there were three or four dozen dirty plates to be removed when the board was cleared; and Bodin, writing in 1574, amused himself with the notion that 'un diner ordinaire' could confine itself to the three courses of the law. Harvests might be short, civil war might multiply the cost of food, sumptuary laws might make the loin of mutton a matter of fine, but Paris, says Bodin, 'will still run to ruin in the kitchen,' and 'let the price of provisions be never so high (quoique les vivres soient plus chers qu'ils ne furent oncques), if there is a feast to be given, it is not reckoned a good one unless there are ticklish meats in profusion to whet and tease the appetite.'

An ambassador from Venice to Paris in 1557, Jérôme Lippomano, supports Bodin, and writes quite simply and without prejudice about this national devotion to Gaster. 'The French,' he said,

'eat little fruit and not much bread, but they are greatly addicted to meat, with which the table is heaped at all their banquets. On the whole, it is pretty well roasted, and generally well seasoned. They are partial to all kinds of pastry, and, whether in town or village, you will find *rôtisseurs* and *pâtissiers* who have dishes either cooked for the table or just ready for the oven. My readers will scarcely credit me when I say that a capon, a partridge, or a hare may be bought larded, roasted, and ready for carving at a cheaper price than the live creature is sold at in the markets; but the explanation is, that the *rôtisseurs*, buying them in great quantities at wholesale prices (les prenant en gros, à bas prix), can sell them to a profit at a very moderate charge. Paris is supplied in plenty with all that it wants for the table. Great as the population is, it lacks nothing; you would think that the heavens rained food upon it. There is a veritable confusion of butchers, provision dealers, *rôtisseurs*, and innkeepers.' The lively ambassador, tombed in the French archives, gets home to the modern reader as closely as yesterday's reporter in 'Figaro' or 'Gil Blas.'

The same gossip informs us that the entertainer, who wished to do the thing in style, could always hire for the day the house of some nobleman or

wealthy citizen, whose concierge or maître d'hôtel provided everything.

'Houses in Paris are let furnished either by the day or by the month; the concierges, who may be regarded in this connection as agents or brokers, are afraid to hire them for a longer period, lest their masters should return unexpectedly. If that should happen, one must flit with all speed. Thus, in my time, Monsigneur Salviati, the papal nuncio, was obliged to move house three times in two months.'

When the town fêted some royal or distinguished person a host of caterers was set in motion, as when a Lord Mayor or a Corporation plays the great amphitryon. There was gold and silver plate in profusion (even if much of it were hired); one purveyor would furnish all the solid viands, another the wines, a third the confectionery, a fourth the fruits and garlands of flowers, a fifth the spices and preserves, a sixth the perfumes and rose-water for washing the hands; and so forth. This was the era when guests in fine houses were first waited on by servants in livery, and the fork was just coming into use.

At the Louvre, when Henri III. was on the throne, of all the Kings of France the most effeminate, the most corrupt and the most contemptible, 'everything went to the deuce,' says M. Franklin, in the

royal kitchen; and in 1582 it was necessary to admonish the cooks to be more careful with his majesty's meals, to send up none but the best meat to his table, to skim the soup, and keep the dishes clean. Henri IV., of valiant memory, much straitened during his long contentions with the Ligue, was not only forced to keep frugal board at home, but had sometimes to fare abroad in search of dinner. His one weakness at table was a passion for melons. Louis XIII., whose reputation is scarcely better than Henri III.'s, cared as little for the table as he did for his friends, his dogs, and his women. Louis XIV., *au contraire*, was a gormandizer whom a kingdom could hardly feed. His case of cold meats accompanied him to the chase, and stood beside his bed at night; and his prowess at table, whenever he dined in public, was the wonder of his subjects. It was the boast of the 'grand monarque' that he took nothing between meals (Marie Thérèse, his spouse, was perpetually nibbling at something), but the truth appears to have been that he *could not*. The Princess Palatine remarks in one of her pungent letters that she has often seen him eat 'four platefuls of different soups, a whole pheasant, a partridge, a great plate of salade, two great slices of ham, a plate of mutton seasoned with garlic, pastry, and after that fruit and hard-boiled eggs.' Saint-Simon says

'With the first mouthfuls of soup his appetite awoke, and so prodigiously and solidly did he eat night and morning, that no one who watched him could ever grow accustomed to the sight.'

As the King had bad teeth, and bolted his food, the doctor was often in attendance. He was a valetudinarian before the prime of life; and his old age was plagued by vertigo, dyspepsia, rheumatism, the gravel, gout, fever, catarrhs, and a settled weariness of flesh and spirit.

The Court and Paris, servilely imitative of the King in most things, confessed him *sans pareil* at the trencher, where indeed none but himself could be his parallel. Under such a sovereign, however, the 'solemn ceremony of manducation,' to borrow a phrase of Lamb, was not likely to diminish, and it is to be observed that while Louis was tucking down whole pheasants for his second course, Paris in general was coming to a more rational and seemly habit at the table. The fork (albeit Louis would none of it, and fed himself habitually with his fingers), was a great civiliser, and simultaneously with its introduction into France, manners began to be softer, or at least more elegant, and the *menu* to feel the first influences of refinement. The abominable *ragoûts* of the fourteenth century had disappeared. The *affreux salmigondi*, and the ducks

spoiled in the manner of M. Taillevent; but even towards the close of the seventeenth century it was still a very usual practice to load the central dish with meats of different sorts. No less was it the custom at this date to overcook viands of every kind; joints were 'roasted to cinders,' and the enormous pot in which capons, partridge, ducks, turkeys and quails stewed together would hang for ten or twelve hours over the fire. Again, if in the seventeenth century spices were not so grievously abused as they had been, almost every dish, whatever its composition, was drenched with one or other of the sickly perfumes of which the Court of Louis Quatorze reeked eternally. Roast meats were covered with a scented powder, capons were 'greased' with sugar-plums, mackerel was cooked in fennel, pastry was steeped in musk, walnuts were eaten with rose-water, and hippocras and every other drink were redolent of musk, amber or roses.

From the middle of the seventeenth century, nevertheless, cookery does assuredly begin to look something like an art. Allowance being made for differences of taste in an age nearly two centuries and half earlier than our own, the 'Cuisinier François' of François-Pierre de Lavarenne (a work which I know at second-hand only) seems a well-considered

and even an erudite treatise. Between 1651 and 1726, says M. Franklin, it was reprinted eight times at least; and the amateur who cares to consult it will find particulars of sixty-two soups, eighty-four entrées, and nineteen ways of cooking eggs. The 'Maistre d'Hostel' of Pierre David appeared in 1659, his 'Le Cuisinier' in 1676, and Robert's 'L'Art de Bien Traiter' in 1674; and the French being by this time as prone to the culinary art as in the past they had been averse from it, the four masters enjoyed a vogue.

Louis XIV. being dead, in 1715, gluttony was no more encouraged in the seats of royalty. One knows how the Court broke loose after Louis had tottered into his grave, what shreds were made of those masks of piety which no courtier dared put off in the closing years of the reign, what saturnalia of Regent Orléans, duchess De Berri, and the rest, succeeded to the dreary pomp and drearier etiquette of the ten o'clock suppers at Versailles or the Louvre; but in this place it concerns us merely to note that towards the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century all the arts of cuisine and table began to be more civil, more delicate, more gracious; that dinner began to be a meal which a nice taste might face without repugnance; and the *petits soupers* of Orléans (feasts of Yahoos under any aspect of morals) were

the first fine efforts at gastronomy. From them we date that 'exquisite cuisine which was presently without a rival in Europe.' And as the feast ceased to be brutish, mind was elevated, and wit and fancy came into their own. At the literary dinner which grew to be a 'note' of the eighteenth century, and which still awakens memories of Buffon, Helvétius, Quesnay, La Popelininiere, Madame Lambert, Madame Geoffrin, and so many others, keen men and clever women assembled not so much to dine as to converse. When Madame Geoffrin (as M. Franklin observes) could invite her friends to 'a pullet, some spinach and an omelette,' it is evident that the bill of fare was no longer the first consideration. The 'feast of reason' encouraged talk on high and daring topics, speculation was not frowned on, minds began to be enfranchised at the table; hence (such an irony is there in things) we may trace even to the *petits soupers* of the dissolute, amiable Regent one of the first causes of the Revolution!

II.

NOT only in the middle ages, but far into the seventeenth century, and in some instances later, it was impolite to begin dinner without washing the hands. The first Napoleon kept up this ancient practice.

The mediæval usage was to wash, either in an ante-chamber or in the dining-hall, before sitting down to table; later, the offices of the ewer and the napkin were discharged by youths, who served the guests in their places, a pretty ceremony which may be read in the old French fashion-books. The meal was seldom begun until grace had been pronounced, but in the middle ages few guests were sober enough to return thanks when it was ended. At this era, dishes were never uncovered until everyone was seated; a rule which had its origin in the mediæval dread of poison. To the same origin is ascribed the universal practice of the *essaie*; that is to say, the chief servitor tasted the food before any of the guests, or touched it with a talisman. Agate, the 'toad-stone,' the tongue of a snake, and, above all, the horn of the unicorn, were regarded as infallible detectives in the matter of poison. No one, to be sure, ever saw an agate sweat blood when the meat to which it was applied had been tampered with; there was no such thing as a 'toad-stone,' and no such animal as the 'unicorn;' yet centuries elapsed before the belief in their virtues was abandoned. Until the time of the Revolution, the case containing these sacred objects had its place on the table of Royalty. The King's wine, too, was always tasted for him by a maître d'hôtel or servant of the mouth,

who kept for this purpose a little cup of silver-gilt.

Up to the reign of Louis XIV. each person at table dipped his spoon into the common bowl or dish; it was not until the close, or near the close, of the seventeenth century, that guests took soup or meat on their own plates. The carver, even at the table of Royalty, held in his left hand the joint or bird which he was carving; and when he had sliced it into portions of an equal size, the fish was either placed upon the board or handed round, and the company fell to work forthwith with fingers and teeth. The fork had scarcely made its appearance, and knives were rare except in the hands of the carvers. Could we restore for half an hour the dinner-table of old France, and obtain half a dozen instantaneous photographs of a royal banquet at any era between the reigns of Francis I. and Louis Quatorze, such a 'cataract of laughter' would be heard as might disturb the serenity of Louis in Paradise. The duchess, her napkin tied securely round her neck, would be seen mumbling a bone; the noble marquis surreptitiously scratching himself; the belle marquise withdrawing her spoon from her lips to help a neighbour to sauce with it; another fair creature scouring her plate with her bread; a gallant courtier using his doublet or the table-cloth

as a towel for his fingers; and two footmen holding a yard of damask under a lady's chin while she emptied her goblet at a draught. All of these at one era or another were the usages of polite society. During a feast of inordinate length it was sometimes necessary to substitute a clean cloth for the one which the carelessness or bad manners of the guests had reduced to a deplorable condition.

For a long time the various courses were served in a rather bewildering fashion; the cook might conceive the notion of sending the soup up after the roast, or he might try the effect upon the company of serving the tart before the game. The mediæval appetite seems, however, to have been proof against these and similar fantasies; and at a much later date it was customary to follow the soup with eggs, and to present the fish towards the middle of the repast. Truffles were regarded as a 'species of dessert.' Polite dinner-goers cultivated the art of peeling fruit, and there were eighteen ways of peeling pears and oranges.

As late as the middle of the sixteenth century, one glass or goblet did duty for the whole table, and this in the houses of the upper and wealthier classes. It did not stand on the table, but was in the charge of a servant, who filled it from a fountain or carved barrel whenever a guest called for a

drink. To drink correctly was to lift the glass with three fingers and empty it at a draught, without gurgling. The host's charge of 'No heel-taps!' (if it is ever heard now-a-days) is a survival of the age when manners forbade the guest to leave a residue in the cup which his neighbour was waiting for. In the seventeenth century there was a glass for everyone, but the bottle had not reached the table. Its progress from the sideboard to the table occupied just another century and a half; 1760 is the date at which the guest could fill his glass by stretching out his hand. Up to this period, the middle of the eighteenth century, it was not incorrect to be drunk before dinner was over. Habit gave the licence to either sex, and no one grudged a lady her weakness for wine. The evidence is as plentiful in the memoirs as in the plays. For the eighteenth century we may turn to Saint-Simon, Duclos, or the Princess Palatine. 'The Duchesse de Bourbon,' says the princess, 'can drink to excess without intoxicating herself; her daughters try to follow her example, but are soon under the table.' In another letter: 'Madame de Berri drinks the strongest brandy she can get.' In a third: 'Madame de Montespan and her eldest daughter can drink remarkably without turning a hair. I saw them one day taking off bumper after bumper of stiff Italian

wine, and thought they would fall under the table, but they might as well have been drinking water' ('mais c'était pour elles comme de boire de l'eau.')

In the matter of drinking, the example of the Court seems never to have effected much, on one side or the other. Under a sober king sobriety was not necessarily the fashion, but under a king or regent who drank unadvisedly there was no increase of drunkenness. Francis I., whose tastes lay in another direction, starved, whipped, mutilated, and banished the drunkard, without making France sober. Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. were as abstemious as Francis, always taking their wine with water. The Regent Orléans was seldom sober, and was so stupid after a hard night that he could be persuaded to sign almost any document in the morning. Louis XV. was intoxicated as often as a weak man could be, and suffered a weak man's penalities for his excesses. But France, all this time, was drinking to its own taste, quite without reference to the sobriety or indulgence of the Court.

Montaigne, with his unfailing good sense, condemns the sottish habits of his contemporaries ('a base and stupid vice'), but adds that they drink less than their ancestors. Stiff topers of the sixteenth century borrowed from the Romans the custom of toasting the health of a mistress in as

many glasses as there were letters in her name, and those who had no mistress to celebrate would drink in like manner to themselves.

'Si le boire n'est pas bòn
Jean simplement j'auray nom,
Mais si c'est beuvrage idoine
Mon nom sera Marc Antoine.'

A name of four letters, *videlicet* four glasses, for a scurvy vintage; one of eleven for a bottle of the best. At a venture, the verse may be Englished thus:—

'When the wine I drink is poor,
Jack's my name and nothing more;
When it's good, then faith I'll be
Ev'ry whit Mark Antony.'

Earlier than this, doctors of medicine had asked gravely whether it were well to be drunk, and, if so, to what extent, and how often. Arnauld de Villeneuve concluded that 'there is undoubtedly something to be said for intoxication, inasmuch as the results which usually follow do certainly purge the body of noxious humours ('des humeurs nuisibles'). His patients are, nevertheless, bidden to go warily to work with the bottle, to content themselves with a moderate bout ('une ivresse légère'), and, in a general way, not to get drunk more than once in

two months. But science should be chary of its indulgences, for this was read as meaning, 'The doctor says we ought to get drunk.'

III.

If the middle ages had an eminent notion of luxury, they had no notion whatever of comfort. The normal style of living in the château or the town house was not to be inferred from the profusion and display which were *de rigueur* on a feast day. The sideboard was not always laden with plate, nor was the table always spread in the great gothic hall. The seigneur much preferred to dine in his kitchen, and did so as a rule. If the *ragoût* were to his taste (very possibly he had cooked and seasoned it himself), he did not boggle at eating it out of earthenware or pewter. His bed-room he reckoned equally as good a place to dine in as the kitchen (Louis XIV., when he dined *au petit couvert*, was generally served in his bed-chamber), and the long and lofty *salle* seems seldom to have been requisitioned except on the occasion of a lavish banquet. If its structure were ornamental, it was coldly and poorly furnished; but tapestries, and the sparkle of gold and silver plate, and the glint of rushes and green boughs on the floor, with flowers

strewn among them, would count for something in decorative effect. The guests sat only at one side of the table, which was long and narrow and placed against the wall. There were no chairs, merely a *banc* (whence *banquet*) or bench, often raised some distance from the floor, and surmounted by a carved canopy for guests of rank. The oval or oblong table, with chairs for the company, did not come into fashion until the seventeenth century, at which period also the *salle-à-manger*, or dining-room proper, first received its name, and was distinguished from the *salon* or drawing-room.

Although carpets and tapestry were known in France at least as early as the thirteenth century, it was more usual at that time, and at least three centuries later, to hang the walls and strew the floors with rushes and fragrant herbs, freshly-cut boughs and flowers. At summer banquets the guests of both sexes often decked their hair with garlands. Carpets on the floor were little seen until the seventeenth century, that era of so many changes touching the art of dining.

Lighting was primitive and picturesque a hundred years after this. A great seigneur giving a lordly feast would line the walls of his *salle* with lacqueys, each armed with a flaming torch, which, by the way, must have been not a little dangerous, and most un-

commonly warm. The amphitryon of lesser rank was fain to light his board with reeking dips, or an oil lamp which, if it shone but weakly, was exceedingly redoubtable as a stench-giver. At the dawn even of the eighteenth century, the wax candle marked some degree of wealth.

The table-cloth dates from about the middle of the twelfth century, the table-napkin from about the middle of the fifteenth. During the Renaissance napery in rich houses was becoming very dainty; somewhat later, the *serviette* was usually perfumed; and in 1639, one Matthias Giegher, in the flower of his genius, wrote a treatise in Italian upon the twenty-seven ways in which it might be folded. Here it took the form of a shell, here of a mitre, here of a dog with a collar, here of a cross of Lorraine, and here of a sucking-pig, as the pantler's taste inspired him. Louis XIV., whose taste was most correct when simplest, had his napkin rolled in the form of a bâton. In winter a considerate host set on the napkins warm. Arthur Young, in his 'Travels in France' (1787-89) comments on the fineness of the linen, and remarks that whereas the English, even those in easy circumstances, dispense readily enough with the table-napkin, the very carpenter in France will have one placed beside his fork. Montaigne, writing very much earlier, tells us that he can get on

very well without a tablecloth, but not so nicely in default of a crisp white napkin.

Everyone at this day, observes M. Franklin, may adorn his table with linen as fine as Louis XIV.'s, but the supreme glory of the old French board, its services of gold and silver plate, vanished, or very nearly vanished, under the terror and pillage of the Revolution. Services of silver and silver-gilt, and rich examples of the goldsmith's art, for the mere decoration of table or sideboard, were common objects in all substantial houses of the Renaissance; but genuine pieces of that date, as the collector knows, are extremely rare in the modern market. If a snuff-box, not of the oldest as such curios go, can be sold in Bond Street to-day for two thousand or three thousand pounds, what sum would be asked at Christie's for an epergne of the sixteenth century? But not all of these treasures, not by any means all of them, were swallowed by the Revolution. When gold and silver plate was a form of capital, it was sold for melting at the owner's need. When the rage of buying it had made serious inroads upon specie, and coin was lacking while plate abounded, the manufacture was forbidden to the goldsmiths, and the Crown compelled or bribed both priest and noble to send to the melting-pot their coffers, chalices and dishes of precious metal. Treasures innum-

erable were sacrificed, in this way, and what remained when the Revolution broke was preserved from that cataclysm in morsels.

But these fine articles, as has been observed, were less for use than for display. With a score of silver plates upon the sideboard the company at dinner were served on *tranchoirs*, or trenchers of brown bread, from the fifteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century. This custom was to the gain of the poor, for the thick slices of bread, soaked through with the juices and gravies of the meats, were gathered in baskets and distributed as alms.

Meagre as was the *couvert* or table-service during so many ages people of fashion, when the knife had come into common use, had special knives for special seasons. Of this curious practice the proofs are furnished in old books of accounts, memoranda, and elsewhere. Thus, the elegant devotee would use in Lent a knife with an ebony haft, on Easter Day a knife with a handle of ivory, on the day of Pentecost a knife of which the hilt was of ivory and ebony combined. This refinement was known in the middle ages, and may have been of long duration. To make a present of a knife was unlucky, and, according to a fifteenth century proverb, to offer one to a sweetheart was to ensure the loss of her love.

At what hour did old France dine? The hour

seems to have changed often, as it has done with us, and the season of the year, class habits, and the requirements of different callings, modified it frequently. Hours of work for the toiler were always long in old France, and in Paris in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries labourers and artisans began at dawn, and were seldom free before six in the evening in winter and nine in summer. For these classes, therefore, the last meal of the day would never be earlier than six p.m.; during a large portion of the year not earlier than nine. Between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, according to the surmise of M. Franklin, the classes more easily circumstanced took a light first meal, the *dejeuner*, between six and ten, dined at about one, and supped between seven and eight. Montaigne rose at seven (a rather late hour for the sixteenth century), 'dined' at eleven and supped at seven. When Louis XIV. came to the throne, the polite dinner-hour was from eleven to twelve, and the supper hour between six and seven. The king himself dined at one and supped at ten, but during Louis' reign this late hour for supper seems never to have been imitated beyond the Court. Towards 1730 it became the fashion to dine at three in the afternoon, and to sup between ten and eleven.

With a change of names for the meals themselves,

the hours in vogue in Paris at the present day were universally adopted among the upper classes at the end of the eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century. The old dinner became the modern *dejeuner*, and supper was transformed into dinner. Observe, however, that it was royalty and the courtly and wealthy classes who restricted themselves to two meals a day (with an occasional pick-me-up, to be sure); below the upper ten, the rule seems to have been as many meals as the larder would furnish, or as could be squeezed in between the working-hours. The comfortable middle classes allowed themselves four meals and five in the day.

But there were always the fasts to be reckoned with, and it is scarcely possible to realise in this age what immense importance attached to these observances, how stringently the church enforced them, and what inconvenience and privation they entailed. The mediæval catholic intent on heaven was enjoined to fast (1) three times every week, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; (2) on the evening before any great festival of the church; (3) three days at each of the periods called the *Quatre-Temps*, which came in March, June, September, and December; (4) during the whole of Lent, Sundays excepted. For people who had to attend as usual to the daily business of life, that is to say for the

majority of the population, the fast was rigorous enough. One meal in the twenty-four hours was the strict rule; it was to be taken in the evening after vespers, and to consist, if possible, of bread and water only. At need, vegetables might be added, but meat of every sort was rigidly forbidden, together with all descriptions of animal food and wine. Further, the devout were bidden to join prayers and alms to their fasts, to give to the poor the value of the food they abstained from, to wear none but sober colours, to put all pleasures aside, and to observe the strictest continence. In the harshest times of the middle ages the fast was binding upon all males above twelve years of age, and all females above fourteen; but when the rule began to be relaxed a little, both sexes were exempted below the age of twenty-one. Next, the evening meal was set back to noon, and permission was given for 'une légère collation' after vespers. In the sixteenth century dispensations for milk and butter were obtained without difficulty; and in the century following, when corn was scarce or the fishing-boats were unable to put in, the Archbishop solemnly decreed the use of eggs, and Parliament as solemnly passed a law to authorise their sale in Lent. But in all seasons of enforced abstinence the use of flesh in any form continued to be an act of treason against

the faith, and conviction brought condign punishment. Imprisonment or the pillory was the penalty, and Brantôme mentions a woman who, for having eaten a little meat in Lent, was sentenced to appear in the streets of Paris with a ham and a quarter of lamb suspended from her neck.

It is easily imagined that persons who were not sustained by the most ardent faith suffered abominably under the tyrannous code of the fast. After a week of Lent, the sight and smell of fish were scarcely endured, and cooks resorted to the most ludicrous devices to disguise it as meat or game. During Holy Week, when even fish was banished from the tables of the unco' guid, similar illusions were practised with vegetables. The high feeding and hard drinking of the *jour gras* were doubtless often a reaction from the unnatural rigours of the *jour maigre*.

I have mentioned Louis XIV. as dining in public. The public dinner was an old tradition of the French court, which lasted until traditions of every sort were overthrown by the Revolution. The people had the privilege of strolling through the palace pretty much as they pleased at the dinner-hour, and of staring at Majesty as it fed. The custom was a nuisance or otherwise, according to the view that Majesty might take. Louis XIV.,

who was by no means so stiff with his people as with his courtiers, seems rather to have enjoyed the admiration which his enormous appetite never failed to excite among the plebs; and in the succeeding reign, the curious would stand on tiptoe outside the line of nobles and gentlemen in waiting, to see Louis XV. send the top of an egg flying with a stroke of his knife. Marie Antoinette, often as she dined in public, detested it cordially, and ate but a mouthful until she had retired to her own apartments.

'Anybody decently dressed was allowed in,' says Madame Campan, 'and at dinner-time you would find the stairs crowded with honest folk, who, when they had seen the Dauphine eat her soup, would go to watch the Princess at their *bouilli*, and then hurry off to see Mesdames at dessert. It is a spectacle which particularly delights the country cousin.'

Casanova was a privileged spectator on an occasion when the Queen dined alone. As she took her seat, a dozen courtiers ranged themselves in a semi-circle some ten paces from the table. Her majesty ate with her eyes fixed on her plate, and took no notice of anyone until a dish was brought on which seemed to please her. Then she looked up for a moment, and glanced round the circle,

apparently seeking someone to whom she might communicate her satisfaction. Presently she found him, and said:

'"M. de Lowendal!"

'A very grand-looking man stepped from the circle, bowed, and said:

'"Madame?"

'"I believe, monsieur," said her majesty, "that this is a fricassée of chicken."

'"I believe so, your majesty."

'This response uttered, in the gravest tone imaginable, M. de Lowenthal stepped backwards into the circle, and the Queen finished her dinner without another word.'

Thus sadly did one eat with etiquette.

TWO 'CIVILITIES'

Is it necessary to say, by way of preface, that the little treatises which in French are called 'Civilités' correspond to our manuals of 'Polite Society,' of 'Correct Conversation,' of 'Behaviour,' and so forth? The English opuscule is lightly esteemed by superior reviewers (perhaps the French one of the present day is not thought much of by reviewers on the *Temps* and the *Débats*), but the next and succeeding centuries will divert themselves over it, and the first historian who can be induced to take a proper view of his functions will find it a useful sidelight upon social history. The best, the most entertaining, and the most informing parts of the historian's business continue to be done for him by the humble writer of monographs, on subjects which are neglected or glozed in the text-books as in the tomes. Still, one has the satisfaction of observing

that, whereas 'history' is little read by the general, the vogue of the monograph increases.

The old 'Civilités'—those of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries (there are earlier ones, of course; and the 'Romaunt of the Rose' is, in very many parts, a 'Civilité' of the fourteenth century)—are becoming rare; but they are not impossible as 'finds,' and cheap finds, on the bookstalls of the Paris *Quais*, and now and again a 'Civilité' crops up in the catalogue of a French dealer. Of the two that are before me, one is dated 1695 and the other 1782. They are both occupied with the civilities of the table, and one may see in them, with no great trouble of reading between the lines, precisely how Paris dined in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are differences between the two treatises, but they are not important; and the sage who writes only seven years before the Revolution is still hammering away at the same points of etiquette which engaged his predecessor. At the very close of the eighteenth century it is still necessary to remind your host that he should not chastise his servants at table, and the guest that if he swallows his wine too rapidly he may choke himself, 'which is impolite and inconvenient.'

In the eighteenth century (and within eighteen

years of the nineteenth) you sit down to table with your hat on—removing it only if your health is toasted by 'a person of quality,' or if you are constrained to rise before the meal is over—and every 'Civilité' enjoins upon you to go to dinner with your hands clean. Apparently there is only one towel, for the 'Civilité' requests that 'a dry corner be left for the person who is to use it afterwards.' Grace being said, and the guests tabled, there is a whole code for the employment of the napkin. It is to be unfolded in a leisurely way, and not as if the guests were in a hurry to pounce upon the viands. It is to be spread over the knees, and carried up to the chin. You may wipe your knife and spoon on it after every course, but the napkin is not to be used as a pocket-handkerchief, nor as a toothpick. It is equally an unpoliteness to wipe your face or to scour your plate with it.

The first dish being served, it is recommended to the guest 'not to gaze at it as if he wished it all for himself,' not to thrust out his plate 'as if it were impossible for him to await his turn in decency,' and 'on no account to smack his lips.' The first dish is a *potage*, in which there are probably some solids floating. If one of these burns your mouth badly, 'make as little fuss over it as possible,' remove it quietly, with your napkin over your mouth,

and 'pass it quickly behind your back' to the waiter. 'Politeness requires that these things be done politely, but you are not expected to commit suicide' ('mais elle ne prétend pas que l'on soit homicide de soymême').

With the arrival of the solids on the table, the rules for the polite diner-out need a little explanation, for at first sight they seem to be addressed to a dinner-party of savages. What, for instance, should one make of the following:—'Nothing is more improper than for the guest to lick his fingers, or to wipe them on the tablecloth or the bread.' This to the *raffiné* who sups habitually with royalty! But the truth and the explanation are, that until the seventeenth century was well advanced everybody in France ate with his fingers. It was so at the 'magnificent' Court of Francis I., at the Courts of Henri II. and Louis XIII.; and Louis XIV., the glass of regal fashion, thrust his hand into the platter like the trooper feeding in camp. Touching this matter, there was but one point of difference between the tables of the great and those of the unlearned: at the former, you advanced three fingers delicately to the dish, and took a morsel quickly at hazard; at the latter, you went a-hunting in the dish till you had made a prize of your favourite piece.

Observe that the fork was not unknown in mediæval France, but in those days it was rather admired as a work of art than polished for the uses of the dinner-table. The dandies and *mignons* of the depraved Court of Henri III. were the first to use it in the modern style, and there is private mention of a proposal to poison the king by means of a hollow fork, from the prongs of which the liquid should trickle into his plate. But the innovation was 'très mal reçue,' and the moralists proclaimed it indecent. From the seventeenth century, nevertheless, the advance of the fork (which the savage finds in the pronged twig, as he finds the bowl in the gourd and the plate in the broad leaf and the shell) may be dated; but the old habit clings, and the 'Civilité' of 1695 is still admonishing the guest that he must not lick his fingers or wipe them on the bread, and the 'Civilité' of 1782 is still dinning into the ears of the elegant that 'viands are served with the fork and not with the hand.' There are similar injunctions or prohibitions as to the licking of the spoon, and these again are echoes from the era when each guest dipped his private spoon into the tureen, and when, in consequence, it was recommended not to lick that instrument before plunging it in a second time. The brilliant notion of the ladle is due to a certain Duc de Montausier, and that reformer was set down as a

person who sought too much refinement at the board.

Other rules as to eating, with which the 'Civilités' bristle, surprise at this day by their seeming *naïveté*. Avoid putting a second morsel into the mouth before the first is swallowed.—It is improper to make two mouthfuls of one spoonful.—Persons of good breeding never swallow without masticating.—If the plate before you is not quite clean, do not scrape it with your fingers; ask for another.—It is impossible to admire the guest who regards his neighbours with a sidelong glance to see if their plates are better filled than his.—Do not try to eat soup with a fork.—The plate should not be scraped with the spoon or fork as if the guest expected never to dine again.—Make as little noise as possible in swallowing.—Do not pile up your plate till it will hold no more.—Do not on any account clutch your plate with your left hand, as if you feared that someone would snatch it from you.—Meat should not be dipped in the salt-cellar or the mustard-pot; take a little salt and mustard on your plate.—No one of good breeding beats a bone on the table, or shakes it, to extract the marrow; it is better to leave the marrow alone.

It would seem to have been no less necessary to instruct the guest as to what he should and should not say at table on the subject of the viands that

were served to him. Guard against a too-candid criticism, is the perennial counsel of the sage. If, on the other hand, the host seeks your voice as to the dish that is before you, 'you will then reply cheerfully and politely, and as advantageously as possible.' But 'there is no occasion to launch out into complaints, as, that the dish contains too much pepper or too much salt, or is too hot or too cold, or not properly served. Such discourses are liable to give pain to the host, who is usually not to blame, and who has perhaps not noticed that anything is wrong with the dish.' An opposite fault which the 'Civilité' is at pains to correct is 'the breaking out into extravagant praise of every dish that is placed on the table. The person who does this will always be set down as too much 'sujet à son ventre.'

For wine and drinking, there is another set of prescripts. In the 'Civilités' of the seventeenth century you will generally read that it is proper and preferable to take off your glass at a draught. This counsel glances at the epoch when one glass served the whole table, in which circumstances it was not polite to leave a heel-tap for your neighbour. Up to the middle of the sixteenth century, and even in good company, the host and his guests had rarely more than a single glass between them, and when a lady drank it was customary for an attendant to stand at

either side of her, holding a napkin under her chin. In the early seventeenth century it was only at the tables of the wealthy that every guest had his glass, and at this date the glasses were not placed on the table, as with us, but ranged on a sideboard, so that you must call for drink at your need. The glass found its place at the guest's right hand not until the middle of the eighteenth century, by which time it had become a mark of ill-breeding to empty it at the first essay, to blow out the cheeks in drinking, to gurgle loudly, or to set the beaker down with a snort of satisfaction.

Lastly, the 'Civilité' exhorts the man of polish not to scratch himself in company, not to snuff the candle with his fingers, not to blow in his soup, not to return the meat to the dish after smelling it, not to talk with his mouth full, and not to pocket the fruit at dessert.

THE FRENCH MEDIÆVAL INN

MASTER GONIN was a legendary wit, whose pleasantries have a relish in them still. Once on a time, coming to the town of Blois, he took note of a wooden cross planted between two inns. 'Behold,' said Maître Gonin, 'a cross well placed, for on either side stands a thief!'

There, in an epigram, is the character of the French mediæval inn.

The wolfish host, on the watch for prey, stands at his threshold, and chants in a curious sing-song the virtues of his hostelry:

Ci a bon vin frès et novel,
Ca d'Aucoire, ça de Soissons,
Pain et char, et vin et poissons;
Céenz fet bon despendre argent,
Ostel i a à toute gent,
Céenz fet moult bon hébergier.

This, in antique French, is an advertisement of no little humour: they understood the graceful art of unveracity in their commerce even then. For the landlord's good fresh wine of Aucoire or of Soissons was most probably known to his customers as *piquette*, —in English, the poor creature 'swipes;' his best fare was cow-beef or hog's flesh, with hard bread and half-cooked vegetables; and this ungrateful cheer he would serve you with a flourish on a bare and greasy board, in the dark and sour den which was the *salle*; while, if you shared the feast with other guests, you also shared with them the one napkin which represented the napery of the establishment. By and bye you might have need to ask yourself whether you could tell cogged dice from honest ones after drinking; and later, when some penniless braggart, declaring that his purse had been slit, proposed to fight the landlord for his score, you might have occasion to defend yourself in a scuffle with the light out. 'Céenz fet moult bon hébergier:' ('First-rate lodging within.') There was humour in that advertisement.

Given good wine, for it was not all *piquette*, the traveller drank his fill cheaply; for in mediæval France the price of wine was absurdly low in comparison with that of bread, meat, fish, or poultry. Poultry, indeed, was a dish for the king's table on

high days, a single fowl costing, it is said, nearly two hundred francs. Chilpéric, seeking to appease the anger of Bishop Gregory of Tours, invites him to dinner, and on the prelate's refusal, begs that he will at least condescend to taste a soup of which poultry shall be the chief ingredient. But, dear or cheap, the monks, who have bequeathed us an imperishable tradition of gormandizing, could generally find a fowl for the pot; and legend remarks that they salved their consciences over it on fast-days with the argument that as birds and fishes had been created on the same day they might be of the same species.

The very earliest records of the old French inn show it a parlous refuge for the genuine traveller, and a perfectly ideal shelter for villainy of every sort. Mine host had a heart for every subject of the king who loved darkness better than the light. What place was best to plan a murder? The inn. Where safest to carry the proceeds of a robbery? The inn. Where were simpletons to be drugged and fleeced, rich purses to be cut from defenceless merchants, stolen girls to be hidden, couriers with letters to be waylaid, knocked on the head and rifled? Above all places in his majesty's dominions, in the inn. When Foulques, Archbishop of Rheims, was to be assassinated, it was from an inn that the murderers set out;

and, in his capacity of 'fence,' or receiver of stolen goods, it was to an innkeeper that the plunderers of the basilica of Saint Martin hurried with the booty. Mine host was the natural accomplice of every crooked wight whose hands were stained with blood or heavy with illicit gains.

At the first, mediæval France patronised the public inn somewhat sparingly. The national traditions of hospitality, seigneurial and monastic, were still not quite extinct; and the inn begins where hospitality leaves off. The middle classes, the small farmers, and the country folk in general, got drunk within their own doors on week-nights, and gave their custom to the inn on Sundays. In the early middle ages, the inn was never the nightly resort of any decent class. The 'decent classes,' tired of drinking at home between Monday and Saturday, swarmed to the inn of a Sunday for their one social bout of the week; but they were never seen there on working days.

There was, however, one source of custom which never failed the innkeeper through the dark extent of the middle ages. He never lacked the patronage of the monks. The mediæval church had a patron saint for every vice that came in fashion, and the indulgence of Saint Martin covered the excesses of every tippler in holy orders. The monk who

could not drink securely in cloisters, took Saint Martin's guidance to the nearest inn, and put to their best, when the dice came out, the sharpest tricksters at the table. As early as 847, Councils of the Church were busy with the scandals of monks in inns, and a forty days' penance was imposed upon every priest who went home sick at night ('qui aura vomi à la suite d'un excés de table'). But the vicious church of a vicious age had its compromise for every vice that was in vogue; and the monk who kept his Lent came lightly off for his frolic at the tavern. 'Theologically drunk,' the offending priest, taken unawares, had an easy retort upon his bishop; for on certain days of the year every church in Paris converted itself into a tavern, and sold wine under its own porch to every comer. Through all the middle ages, the chalice for the mass was full to the brim, and the priest took his draught, *à plein gosier*, on the altar steps. On grounds belonging to a monastery, the dues levied from an inn were so profitable that the abbé who preached against drunkenness from his pulpit was always the easiest landlord for the renewal of a tenant's lease. His peccant priests compounded at an easy rate for their sins of the cup, and legend bears ample witness to their skill in tripping by the heels the regular sharpers of the inn. In the fable of the 'Curé et les deux Ribands,' the monk,

calling for supper at an inn, loses at cards the very nag that has carried him.

'Gentlemen,' says the reverend father, quitting the table, 'you have won a very good horse from me, but I must tell you that he is a little awkward to saddle. Allow me to saddle him for you,'—and in a flash he was up and away.

To such a height was gambling carried in these places that in 1350 a law was passed forbidding inn-keepers to admit dice-players; but in the fourteenth century it was one thing to make a law and quite another thing to enforce it. Drinking in taverns, to take another example, was illegal after curfew, yet the taverns were full till cock-crow.

The scholars of the University, rakes and roysterers of the first water, were tavern-haunters as ardent as the monks, and one may guess that any house of their frequenting was a lively place at nightfall, for who named a scholar named a bibber and a brawler. But the students had at least a better excuse than the monks, for nearly every college in Paris starved its boarders, and unruly appetites were kept in order by that most terrible official, the whipping-man. At Montaigu College, the Dotheboys Hall of old Paris, the younger boys dined on an egg or half a herring, with water and a little bread, the seniors on a herring or two eggs,

a plate of vegetables, and a morsel of butter, with a third of a pint of wine; and on this fare they made shift to master the seven learned arts.* Small wonder that they climbed out of bounds at night, invaded the inns of the Pays Latin, ate and drank on credit, diced away their shoestrings, and bawled improper songs in that true Parisian *argot* which Catherine de Medicis detested, and which Montaigne preferred to the jargon of the pedants. After the fame of Abelard, all Europe sent youths to the colleges of Paris, and all the colleges contributed to fill the inns. The English, they said, were 'lusty and great tipplers;' the Germans 'furious and of lewd conversation;' the Burgundians 'gross and sottish;' the Bretons 'light and fickle;' the Lombards 'misers, cheats,

* Grangousier, thinking that his son's tutor, Ponocrates, has placed the young Gargantua at Montaigu, reproaches him, and is thus answered: 'My sovereign lord, think not that I have placed him in that lousy college which they call Montaigu; I had rather have put him among the grave-diggers of Sanct-Innocent, so enormous is the cruelty and villainy that I have known there: for the galley-slaves are far better used among the Moors and Tartars, the murderers in the criminal dungeons, yea, the very dogs in your house, than are the poor wretched students in the aforesaid college. And were I King of Paris, the devil take me if I would not set it on fire, and burn both principal and regents, for suffering this inhumanity to be exercised before their eyes.'—'Rabelais,' Book I., Ch. 37.

Montaigne ('Essais,' Book I., Ch. 25) is scarcely less emphatic on the subject of Montaigu.

and dastards;' the Romans 'quarrelsome, violent, and quick to strike;' the Sicilians 'tyrannical and cruel;' the Flemish 'prodigal, effeminate, and flabby as butter.'

Scholar and monk rubbed shoulders with the light women, *filles de joie*, who brought much solid custom to the host; with the strolling players and minstrels, the lackeys and foot-runners, the vagrants, cut-purses and adventurers, the pedlars, quacks and mountebanks, the vendors of sham relics, the pardoners, and all that *cahotage* of charlatans infesting mediæval France. The pardoners and the dealers in relics were always among the busiest of the crew. The inn was the mart of marts for their wares, their headquarters in whatever place they alighted. Satire and jest in rhyme and fable hurt them not at all, and took but little from their custom. 'Do but put down your money,' says a jester of the period, 'and these merry rogues will sell you a cartload of laths from the Ark of *père* Noah, the snout of St. Anthony's pig, and the crest of the cock that crowed *chez* Pilate.'

Every night some little drama was unfolded which told a story of the age. The tale of the Sacristan of Cluny, which lives as fiction in the pages of Jean de Chapelain, is history in the jester's mask. A pair of thieves stole from the convent

of Cluny a pig which was fattening for Christmas. They stowed it in a sack, hid it in one of the dirt-heaps which studded mediæval Paris like warts, and returned to their inn to drink till dark. On the same afternoon, a certain Hue killed with a club the Sacristan of Cluny, whom he had surprised with his wife, clapped the corpse in a sack, and deposited it in the mound that hid the pig. The pig-stealers went to the mound to cut a rasher for supper,—and drew from the wrong bag the Sacristan of Cluny!

Slowly as the law moved then, the inn became suspected of every undiscovered crime, and as early as the middle of the thirteenth century, in the reign of St. Louis, it was enacted that none but travellers *en passage* should be housed for the night.

'*Item*: Nul ne soit receu à faire demeure en taverne se il n'est très passant.'

For a time, this enactment kept down the population of the inn, and rendered it to that extent less dangerous to the peace. A later law required the inn-keeper to book his guests by name.

But even to restrict the uses of the inn to the traveller (excluding by this provision the idler, the gamester, and the robber) was not greatly to reduce its custom; for the fashion of travel was already well established, and, to the landlord, every comer

was a 'traveller' who had a purse for the night. The traveller's law was interpreted as the laws of the dice-players and the curfew.

Had it been followed to the letter, it still left to the innkeeper the custom of the soldiery, which, for what it was worth, was large enough in an age of incessant fighting. But, for the sins of the innkeeper, the soldier, who was so often billeted upon him, proved in general the scurviest of his patrons. Archers, arquebusiers, and cavalrymen ate him out of house, and paid with the clink of their money. In certain towns, of which Bordeaux was one, the private citizens were exempted from the charge of housing the military, who were thus cast upon the inns, and it would seem that in almost every town the innkeeper was forced to keep open table for them. Cavaliers of rank found their quarters in the châteaux or in the houses of the richer bourgeois, whence it followed that the innkeeper lost the custom of those who were able to pay, and had to accept without choice the patronage of the rank and file who, as often as not, had no pay at all.

An army without wage is usually an army of brigands; and these regiments, whether in the sacred cause of the Crusades, or in the cause of France against England, or in the cause of some baron who had a feud with a neighbour, lived as best they

could upon the march. They ate up the husbandman in his vineyard, the peasant in his garden patch, the innkeeper in his inn. Plunder was forbidden them, but plunder was often the only means they had of living; '*Damoiselle Picorée*' (Miss Plunder) 'sold me this' was a phrase of exculpation which forgave the private soldier all his lesser thefts. He was forbidden to sleep two successive nights in the same inn, his name was to be written up over the door, and for any gross compliment that he offered to the wife or daughter of his host he was to be hanged without trial on the nearest tree; but these rigours of an imaginary law were honoured only in the breach. The soldier full of booty paid his score five times over, the same soldier out of luck laid his sword upon the table, when the bill was preparing, with a 'God send me no need of thee!' At this pass the landlord considered whether he were a match for his guest.

But, even in time of war, there were better customers than these. Froissart, a lover and connoisseur of inns, makes the hostelry his quarters of a night whenever he is journeying; and in the 'Froissart Chronicles' we see the English captains dismounting by preference at the house with a swinging sign.

We come next upon the curious army of the pil-

grims. What did these, the devotees of distant shrines, as guests of the ribald inn? Their presence there is the final and most convincing proof of the transformation of the whilom zealot into the whining charlatan. For the true pilgrim did not need the shelter of inn; abbey and priory or simple hermitage offered a refuge which he had the right to claim; and in solitary places, where these asylums failed, there was often some wayside cabin set apart for his needs, while few peasants would shut the door against a pious traveller from Rome. What palmer honouring his mission, his vows of honesty, sobriety, and chastity, would not rather choose, all other sanctuary lacking, to sleep at 'the sign of the shining stars' than to press in among the raffs and jades of the *cabaret*? But this was the lodging, and this the company, of the pilgrim's choice. He and his calling had passed into proverb and unsavoury by-word:—

'Trout arrière, trout avant,
Ceux qui viennent de Rome valent pis que devant;

Or

Jamais cheval ni méchant homme
N'amenda pour aller à Rome.'

If we may credit story, jest, and chronicle of the middle ages, the monk, the pardoner, and the pilgrim were three of the best carousers in France; and

Friar John of the Funnels, who is only second to Panurge in the masterpiece of Rabelais, and from whom, for three hundred years, every satirist has copied his picture of the witty, bibulous, and valiant monk, seems to have been (in the matter of the bottle, at any rate) not so much a travesty as a type. Take something of his humour from him, and Friar John's adeptship at the bottle was quite an ordinary gift. Not every pilgrim had his wit, and few had his courage in the lists, but his prowess as a drinker was the badge of all his order. And the pilgrim who had forsworn himself had a Canterbury tale to excuse his thirst in every inn he stopped at, for he jogged a long road 'twixt sign and sign, and he had his song to sing as he walked. That dirge on the daily tramp:—

Quand nous fûmes sur le pont qui tremble,
Hélas! Mon Dieu!
Quand nous fûmes dans la Saintonge,
Hélas! Mon Dieu!'

sustained for hours on a dusty or a frosty course, through districts barely populated, made thirst a kind of virtue in the strolling friar. At least, his journey was his plea. He could, moreover, at a pinch, pay for his supper and his bed with a tale; for he knew the gossip and the scandal of every inn on the road

from Rome to Paris. He was a degenerate and a backslider, whose Church had disowned him, but to whom a corner was assured in every hostel in France.

The best voice of the mediæval church, whether from the pulpit or by story, strove incessantly to turn the pilgrim from the tavern to the monastery. The perils of the 'accursed refuge' were contrasted with the security and repose of those offered by the church to all travellers in the cause of the faith. Legend vaunted the pious hospitality of one saint and another: Saint Euthyménie receiving 'four hundred foreigners' in the *hospitium*, and witnessing a renewal of the miracle of the loaves and fishes; Saint Anthony passing his nights in prayer, his days in cultivating fruit and vegetables for his visitors; Saint Longin welcoming as guests the men who were sent to slay him; Saint Apollonius constituting himself the guide of all strayed travellers; or, to oppose to these examples, it is the story of Saint Fusé, who sees 'suddenly smitten by the hand of God' the churl who had refused him charity. But the great patron saint of travellers was St. Julien the hospitaller, who built a shelter on the banks of a wide and rapid stream, in attempting to cross which many wayfarers had perished.

The fame of St. Julien was European, and every

traveller who would be snugly housed at night put up a prayer to him on setting out in the morning. Rinaldo d'Asti, in the 'Decameron,' falling in with highwaymen disguised as merchants, is asked by one of them,

'And pray, sir, what sort of prayer do you use when you are upon a journey?'

'In good truth,' answered Rinaldo, 'I know little of those matters, and am master of very few prayers; but I live in an old-fashioned way, and can tell that twelve pence make a shilling; nevertheless, I always use, when I am upon a journey, before I go out of my inn, to say one Pater Noster and one Ave Maria for the souls of the father and mother of St. Julien; and after that I pray to God and St. Julien to send me a good lodging at night.'

At a lonely part of the road Rinaldo is attacked by the robbers, who strip him to his shirt and leave him with a 'Go, see if thy St. Julien will provide as good a lodging for thee to-night as we shall have.'

The saint, however, has not wholly forgotten his disciple, for Rinaldo in this plight comes to the house of 'a widow lady of great beauty,' who entertains him very handsomely—and the robbers are presently taken and hanged.

The phrase, 'Avoir l'hôtel St. Julien,' traversed the whole middle ages. It was understood first in

the sense of finding those rare treasures, a good inn and an honest host; and by extension it came to mean any kind of happy fortune. It was 'avoir l'ostel saint Julien' to be successful in love and to find a good wife.

> Qui prend bonne femme, je tien
> Que son ostel est saint Julien.

For the robber and cut-throat, 'avoir l'ostel saint Julien' was to meet with a rich and easy prey; for the woman of the town it was to find an amiable gallant with a well-filled purse.

The hospitable virtues which had been insensibly declining revived amid the enthusiasm of the Crusades, gaining a new vitality from the example of the charitable East. But after the Crusades, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, these generous traditions passed and were lost again; and the inn reaped the advantage. The monks not only sent the traveller there, but returned there themselves. Monk, priest, canon, abbé, nay, upon occasion, the bishop himself made no scruple of using the place which the Church, in all its official utterances, continued to denounce. The bishop who had a quarrel with a monastery which lay upon his road would pass it by and alight at the nearest hostel. To sleep a night at the inn, within sight of the monastery gates, was

his grace's way of showing his very small regard for the brethren. In the time of Saint Bernard, the newly-elected bishop of Langres behaved in this manner.

'He gets down at an inn,' writes St. Bernard, much scandalised, to Pope Innocent II. 'He arrived on Thursday evening, and went away on Saturday morning. One might have thought at first that he acted in this manner out of clerical humility and to show himself little mindful of the honours that awaited him in the monastery; but such was not the case; for the archbishop, on returning from an interview with him, publicly protested that the bishop would consent to nothing, and flouted the very notion of reconciliation.'

Sometimes, on the other hand, it was the monks of a monastery, too celebrated for its laxity of morals, who refused admission to the prelate on his tour of inspection. Odon Rigault, archbishop of Rouen, distinguished throughout his diocese for the vigour and austerity of his rule, having occasion to inspect the abbey of Lessage, could gain no entrance. The monks were keeping holiday, and would not let him in. Driven to an *ostel*, he passed the night there, and presented himself a second time at the abbey on the following morning, with no better fortune. His two demands, that the doors should be opened to

him, and that his bill at the inn should be paid, got not the barest answer. He wrote then to the bishop of Contances, who had the spiritual charge of Lessage, and had the poor satisfaction of knowing that the abbot who had offended him was 'very severely reprimanded.'

It is true that the bishop who made the inn his convenience on Saturday would denounce it from his pulpit on Sunday; but there was one season of the year when he scrupulously forgot his charge,—the season when the dues of the inn-keeper were to be collected. It is a little disquieting to learn that prior, abbé, and bishop had in reality much to gain by assisting privately the industry which they made never an end of reviling *ex cathedrâ*. The poorest little shanty on the territory of the church paid for the privilege of opening its door and exhibiting its sign, and these taxes were gathered with a careful hand.

On king's land there were king's dues to be paid. Anyone might hold a tavern on ground belonging to the king, who could show that he was in a position to pay the king's *chantelage*. St. Louis gave or renewed this permission, and that sovereign of pious fame kept an easy conscience in the matter by stigmatising as infamous every frequenter of a inn who was not a bonâ fide traveller. From about the

fourteenth century the inns of Paris were chiefly controlled by the police, whose regulations were many and ineffectual. Early in the fifteenth century the number of inns and hostelries in Paris was reduced to sixty, but the privileges of the innkeeper were extended; he was exempted from the tax on forage, and was allowed to carry arms. Our Henry VI., during his occupation of Paris, reduced this very moderate number to thirty-four; but Paris was now so large a town that it cannot have remained long at that. Of the rules of the police, some were both foolish and tiresome; thus, the benches for the use of customers must be of a certain size and form, and the taverner who sold wine perfumed with sage or rosemary must hang out no sign except a wooden hoop.

The signs and signboards of the inns were a distinctive and peculiar feature of the streets of old Paris. His sign was a matter of importance to the host, for it marked him out from the keepers of stalls and booths in the streets, the itinerant sellers of cakes, sweetmeats, cheap wines, and all other competitors. The sign that hung resplendent from the gable of the inns rallied its customers, and might become a watch-word throughout the quarter. If it took the likeness of the arms of a county or province, visitors to Paris from that county or

province would almost certainly make the inn their meeting-ground and place of lodging. A hostel of particular repute often gave its name to the street it stood in. There was one known by the sign of the 'Levrette,' where a German traveller new to Paris had taken up his quarters. Returning thither one day, he suddenly forgot the name; that is to say, whilst well aware that he lodged at the sign of the 'Greyhound,' he could not recall the word in French. Passing a pastry-cook's shop, he saw a hare laid out, and knowing that hares are hunted by greyhounds, he enquired of the pastrycook,

'My friend, what do you call the thing which takes that thing there?'

'A dog,' said the pastrycook, when he had understood the question.

'Yes, but a rather tall dog, with long fine legs, and a so slender stomach?'

'Ah, good, you mean a *levrier*,' said the pastrycook.

'That is it; and how do you call the wife of the *levrier*.'

'That lady,' returned the pastrycook, 'is called *levrette*.'

'To be sure!' cried the German. 'And now be so kind as to tell me where is the Street *Levrette*, in which the inn of that name is placed?'

At one period the swinging sign was not the only means by which the inn was advertised. We have seen the host on his threshold, proclaiming his wines and meats; but in the thirteenth century and later there was a class of criers, who made their living by going up and down the streets and crossways of Paris, crying the wines of this and that tavern, and their prices. The crier carried a large wooden mug, filled with the best wine of the tavern that employed him, and finished his exordium at the street corner by entreating everyone to taste it:

'This is the rare wine they sell so cheaply at the "Golden Pestle;" come and taste, come and prove it!'

But this advertisement was not always so much to the gain of the innkeeper as might be supposed, since he was compelled by statute to observe the price proclaimed by the crier, who received it, not from the landlord but from his customers. The crier must visit every morning the inn that had hired him, and demand of any who might be drinking there, at what price their cups had been served to them. The restriction thus placed on him was little to the taste or profit of a landlord who saw no reason why the customer in velvet or brocade should drink as cheaply as the customer in cloth. But the crier had his legal status, his *droit au travail*, as the taverner had;

and, his footing once established, he was not easily displaced. He took his stand upon an edict of Philippe-Auguste, which, in the thirteenth century French, runs as follows:

'Quiconque est crieur à Paris, il puet aler en la quele taverne que il voudra, et crier le vin, por tant qu'il y ait vin à brosche,* se en la taverne n'a crieur, ne li tavernier ne li puer veer' (défendre). In sum: 'Every crier in Paris may enter any tavern he pleases, and cry the prices of the wine sold there at retail. His right of entry cannot be refused, even if the landlord has no regular crier in his pay.'

But the black sheep of the trade (the majority always in mediæval France) found this rule so little to their profit, that, for the best part of a century, from 1274 to 1351, they were continually at odds with the criers whom the law obliged them to employ. The criers, like the innkeepers, were a corporation, and, in the public interest, the voice of the law was generally on their side. The innkeeper who tried to shut his door upon them had his wines cried willy-nilly, and the crier enforced his wage.

One other statute on this subject throws a new light upon the customs and morals of the age. We are to remember, in parenthesis, that the king ensures the tavern and the church upbraids it. The

* By the jug; retail.

article takes this shape in the barbaric French of the epoch:

'Se li roi met vin à taverne, tout li autre tavernier cessent, et li crieur tout ensemble, doivent crier le vin le roi au matin et au soir par les carrefours de Paris.'

The sense is plain enough. The king, who denounces the traffic, is a sharer in it, and monopolises the market until his own vintage is disposed of:

'When the king sends his wine to market, the innkeepers must at once cease from selling, and all the criers must cry the king's wine morning and evening at the crossways of Paris.'

Having entered the business, the king pushed his advantage to the end. His right in the wine market was called the *ban le roy*, and the king's ban was notified in the neighbourhood of every tavern in the town. There is mention of it in the old 'Crieries de Paris':—

'Aucune fois, ce m'est avis
Crie-t-on le ban le roy Loys.'

The king's wine was sold wholesale and retail, in a quarter of Paris affected to the commerce. What came to be known as King's-Wine-Street (Rue Vin-le-Roy) was a narrow thoroughfare abutting on the Rue des Lombards, which was the wine merchant's mart and centre. In a word, the king, by force of

feudal privilege, carried his barrels within the market doors, and kept the trade outside till he had sold them.

But the innkeeper had still two other formidable rivals in his calling. After the king came the seigneur, and after the seigneur the abbé; and, although the seigneur's monopoly was at second hand, and the abbé's at third hand, the one and the other represented a goodly sum. In an old history of Melun, it is gravely written how a lord of that town was punished by divine intervention for seeking to abuse his prerogative. One of his vassals brought wine to the market before the vicomte had cleared out his own and was promptly chastised, while the vicomte's men attempted to stave in the offender's casks. He cried to heaven thereupon, and a miracle was wrought; for while the casks of the vassal resisted every blow, those of the vicomte incontinently burst and let out their full contents. In some provincial parts the nobles, not content with selling their vintage once a year *par hasard*, opened tavern boldly on their own account. Lastly, there was the ban of the monastery, which might, if it pleased, put its vintage up to auction in cloisters, without the trouble of transporting it to market. And all this time, perforce, the innkeeper found his own business at a standstill.

It might happen that he had not bite nor sup to sell to a famished traveller. In remote places where, except for the casual visits of marauders and marauding soldiers, life stagnated perpetually, and every kind of commerce was unknown, the wretched keeper of the wayside inn was sometimes at his last shift for a meal. His larder might have been stripped by highwaymen, or soldiery, or the lackeys of some neighbouring lord returning with their dogs from the chase; and under the royal, or seigneurial, or monacal *ban*, he might have failed to procure a supply of the commonest wine. Cold comfort there for the belated traveller arriving after sundown!

In the tale of the 'Boucher d'Abbeville,' the rich butcher returning from the market of Oisemont is surprised by the night and forced to seek a lodging in a miserable village. Meeting a peasant woman at the entrance, he enquires for an inn.

'We keep an inn ourselves, my husband and I,' answers the woman, 'but you will find very poor cheer there. I advise you, sir, to go to our curé, Sire Gautier; he has just received two tuns of wine from Noyentel, and is the only person in the village who has any.'

In many another village, says the author of the story, Eustache d'Amiens, 'our butcher would have had a similar reply—lean larder and empty cellar

at the inn; at the parsonage or monastery well-stocked larder and cellar stored.'

It is easily understood that where king, noble, or cleric in the middle ages turns tradesman for the nonce, the tradesman as such goes promptly to the wall. The nobleman made no scruple to hire the great hall of his château for a peasant's wedding feast, whereby again the luckless innkeeper lost custom. His narrow, mean, and not too cleanly chamber was little likely to entice the bridal party who could get leave to dance beneath the rafters of their feudal lord; and if the guests had mustered but a score, half of them would have needed to bring their own cups and platters. For the furniture and fittings of the rustic inn were scant and beggarly; a few pewter pots and goblets, some plates and dishes of earthenware, or, instead of plates, mats of coarsely woven rushes; and 'all pell-mell on a greasy three-legged table.' Cloth there was none, and napkins 'of the texture of sail-cloth' were 'a great luxury.' The table would not have seated two-thirds of the party, and the guest who quitted his place for a moment would never have recovered it.

The tariff of the mediæval inn is not to be ascertained with any certainty at this day, but it may be supposed that the landlord took from his guests whatever they were able or willing to pay him.

The rich or careless traveller he fleeced with an easier conscience for the certain conviction that by-and-bye would come along some knight of the road who would offer in payment for bed and board a pass or two with his rapier. There has been preserved to us, however, one interesting item on this subject; the note of expenses incurred at his inn by the father of Joan of Arc, when he came in the king's train to Reims, in September, 1429, to assist at the coronation. He lodged at the 'Striped Ass,' and leaves an order for payment to be made of twenty-four *livres parisis** 'to Alis, widow of the late Raulin-Moriau, hostess of the "Ane Rayé," for monies disbursed in her hotel.' Twenty-four livres would, of course, have stood for a much larger sum at this day, but the bill seems a modest one, for Joan's father was probably a full week at the 'Striped Ass.'

Such, under its chief aspects, was the French mediæval inn.

* The livre and the franc were practically equivalent.

A MEDIÆVAL PULPIT.

BETWEEN the years 1494 and 1508 the church of Saint-Jean-en-Grève was as much frequented as any in Paris. People will generally flock to hear themselves roundly reckoned with, and all Paris knew Brother Maillard's skill in improving the occasion, whatever the occasion might be. The reverend father was as good as a *Times* newspaper or a *Saturday Review*,—I think he was better than either.

From the pulpit of Saint-Jean-en-Grève, as from a pinnacle, he beheld the little world of mediæval Paris, and saw that it was not nigh unto salvation. Nothing that was ill done escaped him; it was a terrible pulpit of Frère Maillard's. He looked out from it and saw the money-changer clipping his pieces, the wine-seller adulterating his wines, the apothecary laying his drugs in the cellar where the damp would make them heavier, the draper giv-

ing false measure, the grocer depressing the scale with his finger. Again he looked out from it, and beheld abbot and monk living riotously, and selling more masses for souls than they could say up to the day of doom, and trafficking in pardons and absolutions; counsellors of parliament bribing the law when they had a case to settle, and lawyers fleecing their clients; noble and bourgeois alike bartering the virtue of their daughters; high dames and low rougeing their cheeks, and wearing gowns that honesty could never purchase, and signalling their lovers in the churches; monks keeping taverns; and fair penitents not over-penitent within the nunnery walls.

In the torrent of his words—for Brother Maillard was such a son of thunder as Paris had not often listened to, and he brooked no interruption—it is possible that the hardy preacher was occasionally carried beyond himself, that the brief was a little overcharged. But we are to remember that these sermons were preached *coram populo*, and in the heart of Paris, and that Maillard held his charge and uttered his valiant parable during a period of fourteen years. Sift him as we may, we are indebted to him for a very curious picture of his times.

The period embraces the last four years of the reign of Charles VIII. and the first ten (or more than

half) of that of Louis XII. This is the very end of the middle ages; for with Francis I., who took the throne in succession to Louis XII., we are at the era of the Renaissance.

Through all this period men spoke as they listed, and the literary style was not much more delicate than the vernacular. Rabelais, whose 'Pantagruel' startled the early Renaissance, and after him Brantôme, wrote in the manner in which all the world conversed. The pulpit itself could be as inelegant as the court, or the street, or the duchess's boudoir, and it would be quite useless to attempt an exact reproduction of the style in which Brother Maillard delivered his soul to fashionable Paris. He is possible only in 'select examples.'

'Answer me, you merchants: is there any difference in character between the devil and you? A rogue and swindler is the devil, you know. You wine-sellers there, are you still palming off as the good liquor of Orléans or Anjou that precious mixture of your own? I see a cloth-merchant or two down there: are *you* at your old tricks too? I know you! Selling your rubbish from Beauvais as Rouen wools, eh? And you, madame la marchande, I hear you're juggling with the scales just as cunningly as ever, madame. Master money-changer over there, how many crowns did you clip last week? My

sweet friends, you will give me no choice but to send you packing to the devil.'

To parents thinking of the law as a fair opening for their sons, he says:

'Take my advice and make cowherds and swineherds of them!'

The lawyers are 'still plucking the geese, I suppose? You paid a good price for the office, you must get the money back somehow, eh? Well, here's a gentleman from Parliament going to help you. I don't know what mess he's been getting into, but he'll be asking some of you to dinner by-and-bye; and, mark me, I shouldn't wonder if there were new gowns for your daughters at the back of it.'

The Parisians as a body, he says, are given over to games of hazard, cards, dice, fine clothes, loose living, and incredible swearing.

He declaims against the printers and publishers who produce and sell unlawful translations of the Bible in the mother tongue.

'Has not Pope Innocent forbidden all books save those approved by the bishop or his vicar? Oh, most miserable booksellers! What! Is it not enough that you damn your own souls? Must you into the bargain damn the souls of others by printing and selling to them vile works in praise of

luxury and love! Avaunt! I banish you. To all the devils with you!'

The University of Paris gets a taste of his invective. He finds both scholars and professors wasting their time in debauchery, and demands of the former whether their parents sent them to Paris to scatter their money among the women of the town, and of the latter whether they are paid to set the students a dissolute example. He denounces the extravagant privileges which the University enjoys.

Endless are his diatribes against women. They paint their faces and wear wigs, their gowns are extravagantly rich, their trains sweep the streets, they carry beads of gold at their belts, but not for devotion; they are perpetually gadding to balls and dinner-parties, and they make the church a place of assignation.

'A fine thing, o' my conscience, to see the wife of one of these advocates, who has just bought his office and hasn't sixpennorth of practice, tricked out like a princess, with gold on her head, and gold round her neck, and gold round her waist. She dresses, she says, according to her estate. Let her go to the devil, she and her estate! And you, Master John the curate, you'll give her absolution, will you? A word in your ear, John,—*I'll* give the pair of you to thirty thousand devils!'

Again: 'And I see that you have not forgotten the red paint for your cheeks, ladies. By my faith, you have laid it on well. Fye! Are these the ways of modesty and decency? But you will go home and say: "Bah! One must not believe all that one hears in the pulpit."—And tell me, mesdemoiselles, is it for the love of Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ that you carry a *paternoster* or a set of beads in gold? I trow not, I trow not. Nay, but our gallants have them too, I perceive. Is this your piety, messieurs, or your vanity? Hark you: mend your ways, break with your vanities, your luxuries, and your light women, or I'll give you to all the devils in the Pit! There are in that same Pit, yea at this very hour, forty thousand priests, as many merchants, and as many oppressors of the poor, who have not merited that lodging so richly as you.'

The clergy of all degrees come off scarcely one jot better than the laity. The terrible preacher upbraids their simonies, the extravagance of prelates and the ignorance of the lower clergy; trickery and impostures on the one hand, and licentious living on the other.

'Benefices are sold in open day,' says Maillard. 'It is well known, I suppose, that to possess two benefices is a kind of damnation, yet are there some who scruple not to hold two, three, and even four;

yea, and a most strange thing it is to note what benefices without number our pious prelates have the art of attracting to themselves! . . . . They tell me, most righteous clerics, that you'll not suffer a shaveling curate in your parishes except he consent to share with you the profits of the sacrament. Pious gains, *hein?* "Master John," say you, "you'll perform this or that service to-day, and there'll be fivepence to you for it." Godly gains, *hein?* Or you'll say, mayhap: "Ho, ho! Master John would like to take the confessions here, would he? By G—! but I'll have two words with him upon that, unless he turns over here a third of what he makes by them," ('à moins qu'il ne me donne le tiers de son profit).'

One begins to think that Rabelais had a valid text for his 'Pantagruel,' in which the foibles of the holy men are not too much condoned,

> 'When pious frauds and holy shifts
> Are dispensations and gifts,'

says Butler in 'Hudibras;' and to these commercial junctures of the faith Maillard has a most pitiless eye. The worker of miracles at so much the miracle, the pardoner, the hawker of relics, and all the crew of mock religionists from Rome, are as detestable to Maillard as to Rabelais, and he has never done with them.

He knows the bishop who goes a-hawking in flat contravention of the law, and the abbot who kennels at the church's cost a pack of most uncanonical hunting-dogs. Anon he spies that Master John the curate, who is his friend by turns and his scapegoat, slipping in the dark into a tavern of very poor repute, and threatens him with 'the leprosy of the devil' should he venture that way again.

He taxes priest and curate with a use of the church not sanctioned by the faith. 'What say you! If these pillars had eyes and could see, if they had ears and could hear, what would they tell us? No, you need not ask me, for I know nothing,—but there are other priests in Paris.' In an advent sermon, he asks whether 'le Christ' came down in search of a cardinal's hat, what number of livings he held, and what sum he spent upon his kennels.

There are passages and whole pages in Maillard more difficult of reproduction than any I have cited, for he seldom quits the license of his speech, and the uglier the theme the more downright is the style in which he handles it. Yet it would be easy to collect from these sermons, violent and overwrought as they so often are, an impression too gross and exaggerated of the age which they reflect. Morals were not exhausted, they were not even at the lowest ebb; but their aspect seems the darker

by reason of the greater light which history has cast upon them. Meanwhile, before the middle ages had quite vanished, the printing-press had been set up, new influences were at work, a new spirit was stealing over Europe, the immemorial prestige of Rome was waning, and the rays of the Renaissance were breaking slowly on the world.

APPRENTICE, WORKMAN AND MASTER

THE little boy running wild in Paris—let us say in the thirteenth century—might be snapped up by the church, or his father might decide to put him into trade. In the cloister or the workshop, he was at least certain of a living. Openings to a reputable calling were very few in the middle ages, but the apprentice had always a future. In a day when the strict laws of trade made open competition impossible (no open market existing), and when competition of any kind was considered not quite fair between two followers of one industry, great fortunes in business were scarcely to be looked for; but the careful tradesman had a chance of growing reasonably rich, and the workman, who, having ended his apprenticeship, shirked the responsibilities of mastership, might always reckon on employment.

Apprenticeship was an important institution in

mediæval France, and one which, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was regulated with the utmost care. The age at which a boy might begin to learn a trade was not fixed with any degree of precision, but it was seldom below ten years and not often above sixteen. The clockmakers received them up to twenty, but this was very exceptional; the limit of age among the bakers was fifteen. If the lad sought admission among the printers and booksellers he would be required to have some knowledge of reading and writing, accomplishments rare in any other corporation. The two indispensable conditions were, that the applicant should be unmarried, and a native of France. Since the term of his apprenticeship was usually long, the apprentice might marry before its expiration, in which case he had the privilege of living at home, at the charge of his master. Very often he married into the master's family, and succeeded to the house. As regards lads not of French birth, there was nothing to prevent them from learning a trade whether in Paris or outside the capital, but the foreigner was dismissed from his apprenticeship before his term was complete, so that he could never attain to the rank of master.

All the trading corporations were jealous and exclusive bodies, and admission to them was a

ceremonious and often a solemn affair. In many instances the young candidate was required to swear upon the relics of a saint that he would be obedient to the statutes of the trade he was to learn; a good deal to demand from a mere lad, but his oath constituted the little person a member of his corporation, and as such his master was bound thenceforth to recognise him. The terms of his contract set forth the number of apprentices the master might receive (one only, as a rule), the fee that must be paid, and the term of years which the apprentice must fulfil. No master who was a bachelor was allowed more than one apprentice, and the same rule applied to the married master whose wife did not assist him in the business. An exception was made in favour of the Jurés, or sworn heads of the corporation, who had a large part in its administration, and who were permitted to receive two apprentices.

The science of economics was in its infancy; it was considered injurious to the interests of a trade that there should be too many masters in it, and the number of these was necessarily limited by limiting the number of apprentices. The rule as to limitation aimed also at the retention of trades in the hands of families. A master who had no son to succeed him would seek, if there were a daughter of the house, to marry her to his apprentice. If he had sons or

stepsons, they were received into his trade on the easiest possible terms, and the road to the *maîtrise* or mastership was smoothed for them throughout. The goldsmiths might receive as apprentices (in addition to the stranger) almost any male member of the family.

For the apprentice who came in from without, the path to the goal of mastership and freedom was, in most trades, a long and tedious travel. The carpenters gave credentials to their apprentices at the end of four years, but in most instances the youths were bound for a much longer period. With the dyers it was five years, with the drapers seven, with the lapidaries, upholsterers, enamellers, and some others it extended to ten years. Where the term was of great length, it might be reduced by the payment of a sum of money on the part of the apprentice or his parents, an indulgence which seems to have been a good deal abused in later centuries, when Jurés were less strict in the performance of their duties, and masters were keener on making profits out of their young men than on turning out a finished workman.

By the rules of the book the master was held greatly responsible for his apprentice; and in the old times beyond, under a wise and kindly roof, the lad who was learning to be a master-workman and

a ruler in his little world, might lead a happy and a profitable life. Often he did so, and when the day came that he might claim his freedom, he chose rather to remain the paid servant, friend, and fellow-worker of the master who had sheltered him from boyhood, and taught him all his craft, than to seek a fortune less assured to him elsewhere. During the years of his apprenticeship the *patron* or master was to feed, clothe, and shelter him—in the homely wording of the clockmakers' rule, to cherish him 'beneath his roof, at his board, and by his hearth' ('sous son toit, à sa table, et à son feu'). Nay, it was strictly enjoined upon the master to treat his apprentice 'as his own son,' and in some trades he was bidden to remember that his responsibility did not end on the threshold of the workshop, that the 'soul and morals' of the little stranger had claims on his solicitude. In a day when the streets of Paris were not very nice for anybody, and were more or less dangerous after dark for everybody, the master was instructed to be careful on what errand he despatched the youngster; and the pastrycooks, whose apprentices were often sent to cry cakes and creams upon the public ways, were continually warned to prevent the lads from falling among evil company. It seems certain that, so far as the middle ages are concerned, the rules, pre-

cepts, and admonitions were not only framed with great good sense and care, but were very rigidly enforced upon all masters who had lads and youths in their employ. High and low in the society of that day the rod and birch were flourished, with small discrimination and less nicety; and if the tutors of little princes had leave to whip them freely, apprentices could not expect to come off too lightly at a master's hand. The use of the rod was accorded to the *patron* (though, by the way, it was expressly forbidden to his wife, in whom the young apprentice seems not always to have found a mother), but the apprentice who carried the marks of a cruel beating to the Jurés of his trade obtained such satisfaction as the little prince could seldom count on. The apprentice who ran away might not be replaced until his master had both searched and waited for him (the pĕriod of grace extending in many instances to six months), a statute designed in part for the protection of youths whom ill-usage tempted to break their bonds. The runaway, on the other hand, should carry his grievance at once to the governing body of the trade; until his case had been settled it was not permitted to other members of the trade to harbour him, and those who did so were 'sent to Coventry,' and found no buyers for their goods in the markets of Paris.

The contract of apprenticeship might be annulled by *vente* or by *rachat*. In the first case, that of the *vente*, or sale, a master had permission in certain circumstances to dispose of or 'sell' his apprentice to another master of the same trade, in return for a sum of money which stood as the equivalent of the unexpired term of service. This arrangement was permissible (1) where the master was incapacitated by mortal sickness, (2) where he was setting forth on pilgrimage, (3) where he was retiring from business, and (4) where he had fallen into bankruptcy. In the second case, that of the *rachat*, or ransom, the apprentice redeemed or bought himself out in advance of the term agreed upon in his indentures; but where this was done, the master could not engage another apprentice until the legal time of the first one had expired.

In general, however, the apprentice served to the full his proper period of four, five, seven, or ten years, upon the lapse of which he was seldom unprepared to present himself to the examiners. Eight days from the term of his apprenticeship, the master who had taught him led the aspirant before the jurors, who required of him a taste of his quality. If a dyer, he must show his hand 'subdu'd to what it works in' by dyeing so many different pieces of fabrics.' The potter must prove his power over the

clay. The weaver would be set to weave an ell of velvet, satin, damask, and brocade. The tailor was required to fashion a doublet, and the sword-cutler to furnish forth a blade. If in this essay the aspirant failed to show himself an artist, he was sent back to the *atelier* for another twelve months' 'prenticeship. If, in the other scale, he won the experts' suffrages, he became in that hour a free man, with a trade in his hand which set him above the favour of kings, and a voice of authority in the small community which was his world.

What degree of material prosperity was enjoyed by the full-fledged *ouvrier*, or workman, in mediæval France, what his weekly or monthly wage stood him in, what it cost him to keep a roof over his head and a family in food and clothes, what sums he could put by, or what he could lay out upon his pleasures we do not rightly know; for every effort to determine the relative values of the monies in circulation has been in reality fruitless. (Indeed, we may come down to a very much later period, and remain as completely uninformed upon this point.) In time of dearth, which was of very frequent recurrence through all the middle ages, the workman would feel the pinch of hunger, but perhaps not quite so sharply as some of those who had neither part nor lot in the organised communities of

trade and commerce. Plague, which stole in so often on the tracks of famine, would take its toll from him. Unjust laws of king or parliament would not always find him shielded by the ægis of his guild. He lived in an age in which the general standard of comfort was extremely low; dwellings mean, meagre, and insanitary; fuel scant and dear, and artificial lighting of the poorest. Ills and deprivations such as these, however, he endured in common with the rest of France; and if his general condition be compared with that of the artisan or labourer in the France or England of to-day, the comparison is little to his disadvantage.

In his contracted sphere the mediæval workman was a person not lacking in importance. All members of the guild were *solidaires*, responsible, that is to say, for its conduct, its safety in the State, its well-being, and its production of articles which were never to fall away from an approved standard of workmanship. The individual workman was made to respect himself in the *atelier* by the quality of work that was demanded from him—rapidity of production counting as nothing in comparison with excellence—and he felt his importance as a man whenever a question vital to the prosperity of his trade came up to be discussed. For politics, so disturbing an influence in the modern trade union,

the guilds substituted an intelligent interest in their own affairs, which was directed to combined and concerted action for the common benefit. Competition was discountenanced as injurious to the welfare of the craft, and everything that savoured of advertisement was energetically damned. Production was everywhere on a small and narrow scale. The changes to be brought about by the employment of enormous capital were not even imagined—the gigantic factory with ingenious machines for every process; the army of workpeople, from the child who picks up loose threads or ties together broken threads on a spinning jenny, and the man who spends a lifetime in fitting a particular piece of metal into a particular socket, up to the skilled overseer; the innumerable subsidiary industries which have grown up to meet the wants of the great factory, the tool-makers and machine-makers, the carrying and railway companies which help to distribute the manufactured goods, the steamship companies which transport them to the ends of the world, the commercial travellers and newspapers engaged in advertising them, and the bankers who facilitate the payments. But up to a certain point the simple and humble system on which trade began had its advantages, and it was the individual workman who knew and felt them. The *patron* was not

then the general of an army who plans operations, organises means, and superintends the execution, but who stands apart from, and immeasurably above, the common body to whom his orders are transmitted, and by whom they are obeyed. He was just a skilled craftsman, whom a little capital (capital, as we mean it, was absurdly small in those days) had enabled to start in business, but who could not indulge himself with fine clothes or a house in the suburbs, and whose social station distinguished him scarcely at all from his hired hands. Not only did he live as they lived, but he worked in his shop with them; and thus the craft guilds, while they fostered honesty of work, fostered also a sense of equality and brotherly kindness.

To seek to enrich oneself at the expense of a brother of one's own corporation was held dishonorable. At the moment at which two members of a trade were striking a bargain over certain goods, if a third appeared on the scene, he was entitled to allot a portion to himself on payment of the sum agreed upon. The millers on the Grand Pont, masters and workmen both, were under oath to assist each other in the event of an overflow of the river. Among the belt-makers and buckle-makers, the orphans of masters left without fortune were apprenticed at the charge of the crafts. Among

the leather-dressers, a master rich enough to employ three workmen at wages, was bound to lend one to a confrère in temporary need of assistance. The crier of burials, when deaths were not numerous, undertook to cry only one in the day, that his brethren might not miss their share. A guildsman whose tender had been accepted for some large contract, such as the equipping of a regiment, was expected to share the work among the members of his guild. The shoemakers bound themselves to pay the same wages to all their workmen. Merchants convicted of underselling those of their own craft were subjected to a fine. Goods sent from without to one of the markets of Paris were deposited immediately at their proper depôt ; the Jurés of the trade concerned visited and reported upon them, and the goods were apportioned in lots among those who presented themselves as purchasers.

Ideas and schemes of charity were not unknown. The workman whom sickness had laid by, or whose old age threatened to be destitute, was always succoured by his guild. Among the glovers and the shoemakers, fines exacted for infractions of the statutes were bestowed to the amount of one-half upon the needy members of the trades. A tailor who spoiled a coat was mulcted in a small sum, 'half of which went to the king, and the other half

to the Jurés for distribution among the poor brethren.' The company of cooks set apart one-third of the fines levied by them for 'masters and workmen fallen upon evil days.' The goldsmiths took it in turn to keep one shop in their craft open on Sunday, and the profits of that day furnished a dinner at Easter for the sick poor of the Hôtel-Dieu. In 1399 the master-goldsmiths opened an asylum for the indigent and widows of the corporation. The drapers, as often as they bought a roll of cloth, set aside one denier towards the purchase of corn for the poor; and at every banquet of this guild portions of bread, meat, and wine were sent to the inmates of the Hôtel-Dieu and the prisoners of the Châtelet. The bakers were prohibited from baking on the Day of the Dead, except a certain kind of bread which was given to the poor. Fines of poultry and game among the poulterers were divided between the Hôtel-Dieu and the Châtelet. As early as the first years of the fourteenth century the furriers had established among themselves an institution closely resembling the modern 'benefit' society, each member paying an entrance fee and a small weekly subscription. The curriers followed this example towards the middle of the same century, and it was afterwards imitated to some extent by many other trades in Paris.

Instances such as these seem to bridge the interval of six hundred years which divides us from the middle ages, but the truth of course is that the master-workman of the earlier epoch would recognise scarcely anything in the trading world of our era. Two things especially (leaving on one side the features of free and universal competition and the necessity and rage of advertising, for which competition is peculiarly responsible) would evoke surprise in him in an almost measureless degree. The first, that in the great majority of trades at the present day there is practically no responsibility amongst the members, nothing which corresponds to the mediæval principle of *solidarité*, whereby a definite standard of excellence in manufacture was both ensured and enforced, and a guarantee of fair dealing exacted. The second—and his surprise in this instance would be, perhaps, even greater than in the former—that anybody may open shop in any line of industry, without being called upon to furnish the slightest proof either of his ability or of his good faith. I may seek to-morrow to bring discredit upon the respectable corporation of wine-merchants by seducing the public with a prospectus of new wines for old, myself not knowing old from new. The wine-merchants may suspect my practices, but as they no longer sit in council, with statutes at their

back, if my bottles are doctored and labelled to please the tastes of the general, they cannot oblige me to put up my shutters, and no person in the trade can do more than visit me with his private indignation. Again, my neighbour on my right, as unfamiliar with cutlery as with the *Pandects* of Justinian, may start in business as a cutler this week, intent on selling at a high price the worst razors the public can be deceived into paying for, and no honest member of that trade can arraign him. My neighbour on the left, whose private knowledge makes no distinction between leather and prunella, but who descries a profitable opening in the boot-trade, may advertise and sell as water-proof a boot that has not one shred of leather in its composition, so long as customers can be found for the article.

Now, the quack or the rogue had a well-marked field for his talent in mediæval France, but the regulated ways of honest trade were closed to him. It was impossible for a trickster or a mere adventurer, unversed in any industry, to creep into the first guild that attracted his fancy; and as for attempting to embark in business without having taken the guild's degree, it would have been as easy as an amateur yachtsman would find it to obtain the command of a cruiser. The apprentice of ten years' standing was not allowed to call himself

'workman' until he had proved to the satisfaction of a board of expert jurors that he had learned his craft to perfection, within the limits prescribed by the guild; and the master-workman, who had been admitted among the artists of his calling, and who was allowed as many hired *ouvriers* as he could keep in wages, was never free from inspection by the Jurés of his own corporation. They were not only entitled but compelled to pay him an occasional visit of surprise, and any defective work which they found in his hands was condemned and destroyed.

Up to a certain standard of finish, a standard adopted by the trade as a body, no craftsman had any liberty, or could exercise any discretion of his own. If a customer wanted a piece of carving, or a length of cloth, or a pattern of saddle, or a silver bowl, in a cheaper style than the standard of the trade permitted, it could not openly be furnished to him. Nor, unless he hoodwinked the inspectors, could a craftsman in any industry venture to sell to anyone an article which he knew to be defective. He was put upon his honour to offer nothing that was bad, and if he attempted it, and were detected, he paid a heavy fine. The wheelwrights, for example, undertook to build no cart such as they themselves would be unwilling to pay for and to

use; and a cart condemned for its wheels was broken up. Certain kinds of repairs were strictly forbidden: the hatters were not allowed to dye an old hat, nor the perruquiers to restore an old wig, lest the shopman should be tempted to sell it for new. Piece-work, carried out in the worker's own house, and all work by candlelight, were discouraged, discountenanced, and in most instances disallowed. The goldsmiths, an important body, could not obtain leave to work by artificial light, except upon a commission for the king or a member of the royal family. The rule—all but universal in the trades of Paris—was, that work must be done by day, and in the master's shop, under the eye of the customer. Old engravings show the shop and the workshop as one: what the customer asked for at the counter he might see in process of making behind it. In a word, the ugly, the common, the cheap, and the second-rate—*i.e.*, the mass of effective rubbish which a 'market to suit all tastes' has inflicted on us—could not be bought in the Paris of the middle ages, of the Renaissance, or of the 'Grand Monarque.' The connoisseur who happens also to be a collector knows it to his cost.

But, when all has been said upon the other side, it will be desirable not to leave the last word with the middle ages. We, the buyers and consumers of this

day, are losers by the lapse of that system of manufacture which insisted that every article of industry should be good and durable of its kind, and no system will arise under which we shall be able to forget how right it is for the craftsman to be trained to his craft, and how much more prosperous is the State in which the ignorant or indifferent craftsman, and the common rogue or trickster, are kept at arm's length in all trades. But the system we have been so lightly discussing had one very grave defect, a defect not only inimical but fatal to real progress wherever it is found, a defect which had much to do with the ultimate ruin of the craft guilds in France and elsewhere. Such were the tyranny of custom and the dread of innovation in these guilds, that the Jurés who laid one hand on a bad piece of work would lay the other hand, and much more sternly, upon a masterpiece. The best was condemned equally with the worst. No man might go beyond or seek to improve upon the fixed unalterable standard of his craft; the experiments and the finished products of original genius were denounced, destroyed, or mutilated. Inventor and innovator alike were suspected either of seeking some illicit private gain or of drawing inspiration from magical and yet darker sources. Not in the middle ages, merely, but in the comparative enlightenment of the seventeenth century, any work con-

fectioned or fabricated beyond the statutory limits of the trade was branded as 'occult;' and, if the authority of the Jurés counted for anything, it passed forthwith into the shade. Its author had only one resource, an appeal to the king.

This heroic measure was sometimes but by no means always successful. Three coppersmiths contrived a new pattern of morion or helmet, lighter and more convenient than the style in use, and submitted it to their guild. But the guild would have none of it, for the new morion defied the rules; moreover, the armourers, who had a monopoly of the manufacture of defensive arms, would be certain to oppose them. In this strait, the inventors addressed themselves to the king, who, overriding all the customs of the crafts, granted them a patent for their morion.

THE SURGEONS, THE BARBERS, AND THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE.

SURGERY begins in France (and elsewhere?) not with the surgeons but with the barbers. 'La chirurgie française,' says M. Franklin, 'a été créée par les barbiers; ceci est hors de doute.' He continues:

'Our surgeons of to-day are the direct and immediate descendants of the barbers; not of that little body of sworn surgeons (*chirurgiens jurés*) whose sole ambition was to copy the doctors, to have as much Latin as the doctors ('de savoir comme eux le latin'), and whose dignity was hopelessly compromised by any handling of the scalpel. The barbers, it is true, spoke nothing but French; but they were never ashamed of their trade, and they did not scruple to soil their hands in the dissecting-room. In the ranks of the old surgeons, so-called, you will find it hard to come across a man of real worth ('on ne recontre pas

un homme de réelle valeur'). Every surgeon whose memory science has preserved to us was a member of the humble corporation of barbers. To have descended from that corporation is to claim descent with the good and great Ambroise Paré, the father of modern surgery.'*

The struggle of the barbers against the prejudice of five centuries is an instructive chapter in the history of France. M. Franklin, a philosopher with a wit, thinks it might be written afresh as a moral tale for the young: 'Le bon Fridolin et le méchant Thierry.' The good Fridolin to stand for the barbers, who, 'maltreated now by the surgeons and now by the doctors, came at last, by perseverance and by labour, to win the day over both their rivals.'

Not until Louis XIV. mounted the throne did the surgeons, recognising their helplessness, join forces with the ignoble barbers. The corporation, which included the members of these two callings, became from that date the target of the old-fashioned, stiff-necked, and pedantic Faculty of Medicine, which was afraid of the surgeons and contemptuous of the barbers, and entirely united in its hatred of both. Surgeons and barbers alike, in the eyes of the Faculty, were 'poor devils of artisans,' not fit to

* 'Les Chirurgiens.' In the Series of 'La Vie Privée d'Autrefois.'

scour a doctor's doorstep. They kept shop in the street, barbers and surgeons both, with a sign over the door. 'The Faculty took to itself the right and monopoly of instructing them in an art which it despised, and which it made a boast of never practising. These booted lacqueys should wear neither gown nor cap; they should swear obedience to the all-puissant Faculty. Well, a day came when those pariahs of the medical art not merely took equal rank with the doctors, but, by a just decree of fortune, were practically set above them, and enjoyed an almost higher reputation in the general esteem.'

To work with the hands at any occupation whatever was to be accounted little better than a serf in France until the middle of the seventeenth century. All 'manual labour'—the most honourable, the most useful, the most ornamental—placed the worker inexorably 'dans la classe ouvrière.' The artist whose brush could set a masterpiece upon his canvas was on a level with the dauber of signboards, and subjected to the laws which controlled every *corporation ouvrière.* The painter or sculptor of genius was, for a long time, the social inferior of the mercer, who 'kept a shop,' it is true, but who did not make with his own hands the things he sold over his counter. The Academy of Painting, founded in 1648 by the 'painters and sculptors of his Majesty,' was years in

getting a fair distinction established between the 'workman' and the 'artist.' And the mercers who were ranked above the confraternities of the brush and chisel were ranked also, says M. Franklin, 'very much' above the surgeons, who, after their amalgamation with the barbers, continued to form a mere *corporation ouvrière*, and were formally classed with 'artisans and common labourers.' The social and legal bonds which united them with the *classe ouvrière* were finally and completely severed only by Louis XV.'s Declaration of 1743; and right up to the Revolution a fashionable doctor was held to demean himself by the act of bleeding a patient.

In the very middle of the eighteenth century the surgeon who sought to better his position by procuring the *licence en médecine* must give an undertaking in the presence of notaries that he would perform nothing in the nature of a surgical operation, for, said the Faculty, 'the dignity of the Medical Order must be kept pure and intact.' Louis XIV., in the act of ennobling the surgeon Clément, who had presided over the accouchement of the Duchesse de la Vallière, expressly stipulated that he should not be required to renounce his profession. So also did he insist, when bestowing the patent of nobility upon his own chief surgeon, Félix, that he should continue to enjoy his surgeon's title 'without reproach!'

Something of this reproach, as touching the surgeon and his calling, we may trace to the influence of the mediæval Church,—which has already so much to answer for. In the middle ages everyone who could read and write was a 'clerk,' and had his being in the Church, or under the Church's immediate patronage. Now it had been taught in very early days that 'Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine.' ('The Church holds blood in abhorrence.') The precept was perhaps not too literally observed in later days, but it availed to restrain the 'clerkly' classes from the study and practice of surgery, and thus indirectly to deliver that luckless art into the keeping of 'charlatans, old women, and barbers.'

Towards the thirteenth century, however, according to M. Franklin, a glimmer of light appeared. A few barbers of intelligence endeavoured to put a little spirit into their brethren. 'They left off shaving and hair-cutting in order to devote themselves exclusively to surgical operations, and at the same time they instituted a special inner circle of the confraternity, and invoked for it the protection of St. Côme and St. Damien,' two blessed practitioners supposed to have cultivated the art in Arabia. Their statutes, 'like those of most other artisans,' were submitted for the approval of the provost of Paris, by whom they were forbidden to render secret as-

sistance to 'murderers or other villains,' whom justice proposed to heal or to dissect on its own account. The community was administered in ordinary by six chief persons elected by the rest of their fellows. Thus, from about the thirteenth century, we have a small body of surgeons forming a special class among the general (and not very numerous) corporation of barbers.

It has been insisted by certain historians, interested in giving the profession a decent start at the earliest possible date, that the *College* of Surgeons was founded by St. Louis; but the truth is that the surgeons did not possess a college of any sort for at least two centuries from that pious monarch's reign. It is important mainly to note that, from near the close of the thirteenth century, the corporation of barbers was divided into two classes. There were the lay-barbers, known later as barber-surgeons, and surgeons of the short gown; and barber-clerks, named also surgeon-barbers, surgeons of St. Côme, and surgeons of the long gown. The chief preoccupation of the second class, says M. Franklin, was to keep the lay-barbers at arm's length, to acquire the style and dignity of *corps savant*, and to tread on the heels of the doctors.

Italy at this time possessed surgeons 'really worthy of the name,' and the civil wars in that

country exiled to Paris in 1205 two distinguished professors, one of whom, Lanfranc of Milan, became the friend and ally of barber Jean Pitard, who served in succession Philippe IV., Louis X., Philippe V., and Charles IV. These twain of courage and address carried war into the camp of the lay-barbers, a humble folk, and for the most part honestly unlettered, who were not very safe in the handling of any other instrument than the razor. Ostensibly, Lanfranc and Pitard were reformers in the interests of practical and scientific surgery; in reality, their action signalled the commencement of that struggle for supremacy between the two classes of barbers which was not to cease within four hundred years and odd.

The surgeons, or surgeon-barbers, drew the first blood. A royal *ordonnance* of 1311 forbade the practice of surgery to 'those barbers not recognised as apt for the business' ('qui n'auraient pas été reconnus aptes à ce métier'). They must hold the certificate of Jean Pitard, 'surgeon of the Châtelet, or his successors.' Forty years later, in 1352 (Pitard being by this time out of the lists), Jean II. rendered a new decree against the 'barbiers illettrés,' observing with regret that 'the art of surgery was passing into unworthy hands,' that it was attempted to be practised by 'charlatans, alchemists, usurers, robbers,

and assassins,'—a singular crew to be banded in the interests of a most pacific calling. This edict was renewed in 1364, the last year of Jean II.'s reign; during the fourteenth century laws were passed, re-enacted at intervals, and scrupulously disobeyed, quite as a matter of form. John's successor on the throne, Charles V. (the Wise), not quite clear as to the merits of the quarrel, and regally indifferent to them, 'admitted the two classes of barbers to equal rights in the practice of surgery,' and put them both under the charge of his own chief barber (1371). The two classes were now again one corporation, but it is to be remarked that the lay-barber had gained a march upon the clerk-barber, or surgeon. For the barbers 'as a body,' said the king, were to 'have the care of the sick, and to perform all surgical operations;' and the royal edict went on to particularise the case of the barbers whom the 'sworn surgeons and doctors' had hindered in the exercise of their calling, 'to the great prejudice of the public weal and of all our subjects, and to the especial prejudice of poor and humble folk who cannot buy the services of great surgeons and physicians.' Ordained accordingly, that the said barbers should have the full and free exercise of their art, unmolested by the surgeon-barbers and the doctors.

It may be admitted readily enough that the decree of 1371 went a step too far, inasmuch as it gave the rights and privileges of the skilled surgeon and physician to every charlatan who could get leave to hang over his door the barber's sign of the three basins; but Charles V., M. Franklin reminds us, was under the thumb of his 'premier barbier,' who was bent on scoring for his own side.

Thrown over by the king, the surgeon-barbers betook themselves to the University of Paris, and humbly begged asylum in that mighty and majestic bosom. They were not quite unworthy, they pleaded, of such august protection. '*We* have passed examinations,' they said, 'whereas this herd of barbers has made a mock of learning.' But the University treated them flippantly, counselling them to return to school. It would receive them as scholars at its own benches (or in the rushes, rather), but not on any other footing,—'tanquam veri scholares et non alias.'

Half a century later, in 1436, the surgeon-barbers knocked at the door again. Would the University receive them this time? The books were turned up, to see what answer had been given in Charles V.'s reign (it being now the era of Charles VII.), and the same response precisely was vouchsafed. The University would extend its protection and its

privileges to the fraternity of surgeon-barbers, if they were willing to take their places in its classes, 'which could not but prove beneficial.'

The barber-surgeons were not concerning themselves with the intrigues of the surgeon-barbers; a kindly fortune was steadily directing their affairs. A few years from this, Louis XI. came to the throne, and the celebrated barber of that king, Olivier Le Daim, or Le Dain, zealous for his class, obtained confirmation of the rights accorded in 1371. Olivier Le Dain was a good champion and a bad foe, and the surgeon-barbers had met their match. The king's barber was declared 'maistre du mestier,' the head of the profession. Vanquished by the barbers, the surgeons found their account next with the Faculty of Medicine, a more redoubtable adversary.

We are now within touch of the sixteenth century; and from this date, observes M. Franklin, 'it is the doctors who hold the office of arbiter between the barbers and the surgeons. Were they worthy of it? By no means. Nay, if we were to assign their classes to the three parties in order of actual merit, we should place the barbers in the first and the doctors of the Faculty in the third. Servile disciples of Hippocrates and Galen, the doctors confounded the teaching of those great

masters in the pedantic jargon of their commentaries. The surgeons, for their part, were scarcely more sincere in their devotion to the science of their art. Ashamed to wield the scalpel, they were beginning to forsake the practical side of surgery for the study of Greek and Latin. . . The barbers, sadly defective in Greek and Latin, could borrow nothing from the past. But they saw with their eyes, and touched with their hands, and, perhaps unwittingly, they fell back upon that principle which was to revivify the whole art of medicine, the great principle of observation.'

By way of check to the wily advances of the surgeons, the Faculty drew to itself the barbers, those very ignorant persons from whom, in its own opinion, it had nothing whatever to fear. Casting tradition to the winds, the Faculty consented to admit the barbers to a course of anatomy in French. The step was revolutionary, for Latin was the sole speech of the learned, and the Faculty was nothing if not *savante*. The surgeons put out a wrathful protest, and the Faculty withdrew a little. The Latin anatomists should be read to the barbers, and then minutely expounded in the vulgar tongue. Further, the barbers should have leave to purchase from the gibbet a criminal corpse for anatomical purposes,—a privilege which, as will presently appear, the Faculty

was very chary of bestowing upon persons not of its own order. The barbers, it is said, profited so well by these imperfect lessons in anatomy that they soon outstripped the surgeons, and gained a great reputation for their skill in operations.

Baffled again, the surgeons feigned humility, and sought leave to share the anatomical course of their rivals, which was granted. Emboldened by this partial capitulation of the surgeons, the Faculty took a more decisive step. With the approval of Oudin de Mondoucet, Louis XII.'s chief barber, it formed a fresh pact with its new allies, engaging to give them all needful instruction, not in Latin, but in the mother tongue, and 'to support them on all occasions in the exercise of the art of surgery.' The barbers on their side were to swear fealty to the Faculty, to submit themselves to be examined by its doctors, and to abstain from the practice of medicine.

This treaty ratified, the surgeons, in the estimation of the Faculty, had ceased their existence. The doctors 'called in none but barbers to operate on their patients.'

The surgeons perceived that their case was growing desperate. They saw but one clear course, which was to treat with the adversary whiles he was in the way. At all cost of dignity a peace must

be patched up with the Faculty. To the Faculty they went accordingly, and their address, if not wholly ingenuous, was excellent pleading. It had reached them by the tongue of rumour, said their spokesman, that malevolent persons gossiped of their disaffection towards the august and thrice-honourable Faculty of Medicine, even going so far as to declare that the surgeons of Paris were neither its scholars nor its subjects. 'But, worthy sirs, we are both; and never did we think of denying it.' Nay, they had brought notaries with them, in whose presence they were prepared to make the declaration in the proper form. The *doyen* of the Faculty, by whom the surgeons were received, took their oath on the spot, and peace was formally concluded. This passed in 1507, when the last of the mediæval kings was on the throne. Thus, at the dawn of the Renaissance, victory was wholly with the Faculty. Over the surgeons and barbers both it had cast its net; but the peace was scarcely ratified before the surgeons were straining at the meshes.

The situation at the commencement of the sixteenth century is thus set forth by M. Franklin :—

(i.) The surgeons had to some extent the upper hand of the barbers, who could only be received as 'masters in the art' after the surgeons had examined and approved them. This was the result of a

private understanding between the surgeons and the Faculty after the conclusion of the triple alliance.

(ii.) The Faculty of Medicine was in authority over both its allies, inasmuch as 'the doctors' consent and approval were necessary to the reception of both barbers and surgeons.'

(iii.) The ambition of the surgeons was to see themselves incorporated in the University, that of the barbers to see themselves incorporated among the surgeons.

(iv.) Lastly, between 1515 and 1533 the confraternity of Saint-Côme 'had received the official designation of College,' and the Faculty had offered no protest.

Such was the situation when Ambroise Paré arrived in Paris, towards 1532, and entered himself apprentice to a barber. There, like any similar apprentice, he was initiated into the mysteries of shaving, hair-dressing, and poulticing. What time he could spare from these was probably given to the hospitals, then as now the best field of study for a surgeon. Admitted *maître barbier-chirurgien* in 1536, he opened shop forthwith under the barber-surgeon's sign of the three basins. But his activity and zest of practical knowledge demanded a wider and more strenuous scene, and he went to the wars with

Francis I. Returning to Paris in 1539, a hardy campaigner with stores of new learning from the battle-field, he married two years later, and in 1542 he was off to the camp again. His first book, a monograph on the treatment of wounds received in battle, appeared in 1545; but Paré's career is altogether too large, too picturesque, and too important to be cramped into a paragraph. Suffice it for the present purpose that when, in 1550 or 1551, he was appointed surgeon-in-ordinary to Henri II., being now a man of no small distinction, the College of Surgeons (an institution in which, M. Franklin observes, 'les hommes habiles étaient rares') perceived that Paré must be secured *à tout prix*. But a formidable difficulty presented itself at the outset. Candidates must be examined in Latin; at the least, the thesis must be composed in that language, and the king's surgeon-in-ordinary had not a tag of Latin in his very able head. He deplores its absence with a candid and characteristic modesty in the dedication of one of his books:—'N'a pleu à Dieu faire tant de grâce à ma jeunesse qu'elle aye esté en grec ou latin instituée.' ('It pleased not God that my youth should be forwarded by Greek or Latin learning.')

By some discreet process of dissimulation 'a grave infraction of the rules' was made possible,

and in 1554 Ambroise Paré received his cap and his degree.

After the death of Henri II., he was officially attached to the persons of Francis II., Charles IX., and Henri III. Charles IX. intervened to save him from the massacre of St. Bartholomew (his majesty's nurse is said to have been the only other person to whom his protection was accorded on that occasion); and Henri III.'s regard for him was reflected upon the whole body of surgeons. Henri renewed the decree of 1544, by which Francis I. (the first of Paré's patrons) had created a Faculty of Surgery, with privileges not inferior to those enjoyed by the University. The Faculty of Medicine had offered no opposition, and when Henri III. went a step beyond Francis I., and gave permission to the surgeons of Saint-Côme to open a course of public lectures, the doctors contented themselves with a counter-move in the interests of their favourite pawns, the barbers. They relinquished their rights of presiding over the technical examinations of the barbers, and bound themselves anew to further the studies of that fraternity by 'lending' them 'two good and notable reading doctors,' who should read from the Latin into the French all hard meanings in the anatomists, who had chosen to write only in the tongue of clerks and scholars.

Between the surgeons and the Faculty it was move for move; and in this curious struggle the surgeons had sometimes an inspiration of genius. In 1579 they seduced the Pope. A Bull of Pope Gregory XIII. took the surgeons under the wing of Rome, which had conveniently forgotten its 'Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine.' It is not clear at this day what was the exact value of the Papal championship in a matter of surgery, but the Faculty of Medicine thought so much of it that the *doyen* and his elders summoned to their aid the authority of the University of Paris. The University protested that 'there must be some trickery, that the bull could scarcely be genuine' ('qu'il y a abus, que l'indult ne peut être authentique'). The surgeons answered the challenge by producing a certificate, 'signed by three bankers of Paris.' The University 'wrote to the Pope,' and the Faculty 'appealed to Parliament.' The Pope, it seems, did not reply to the University; and Parliament, having a less easy means of escape, was 'much embarrassed.' On consideration, it took the prudent course of shelving the whole question ('mit l'affaire de côté'), which seems by-and-bye to have been so completely forgotten that, at the close of the sixteenth century, we have the surgeons presenting themselves as of old to take the oath of fealty and obedience to the Faculty. The end of

the century saw the doctors sitting firmly in the seat of power.

Louis XIII. (whose birth has been reproached upon his father Henri IV., as the one act he should blush for) dawned upon France with the dawn of the seventeenth century. He passed beneath his barber's razor for the first time twenty-three years later (1624), and had the artist of the occasion been at all worthy of his calling as a collegiate of Saint-Côme he would have made the king pay his scot. To take the maiden beard of a King of France is not every barber's fortune,—and the uplifted razor utters its own exhortation. But the chief barber won nothing from his majesty. It chanced, however, that Louis XIII.'s birthday was also the *jour de fête* of those mythical but canonised professors, Saints Côme and Damien; and the king was pleased to extend a hand to their shades by permitting the corporation of surgeon-barbers to plant a fleur-de-lys in the centre of their shield.

The struggle between the two opposing parties went on slowly and foolishly. Sometimes it was foolishly varied; the Faculty turned upon one of its own children. One of the doctors who had been 'lent' to the barbers gave them, on his own responsibility, a course of lectures 'on respiration.' The Faculty was of opinion that respiration 'was

not within the science of barbers,' and, as usual, 'referred the case to Parliament.' Parliament confessed its incompetence in the matter,' and suggested that the Faculty 'should take an early opportunity' of deciding 'quæ sint chirurgica'—in what precisely the field and functions of surgery consisted. The Faculty responded off-hand, that surgery was 'a manual art,' limited to 'the separation of parts, the re-uniting of parts divided, and amputation' ('la diérèse, la synthèse, et l'exérèse').

The barbers themselves took no stock whatever in these quarrels. They kept their noses to the grindstone, and were always learning something. When the doctors read anatomy to them in Latin, they made the best they could of the explanations in French. When the whole course was in the mother tongue, they missed not a word. Step by step and point by point, in a word, the barber-surgeons were slowly transforming themselves into surgeon-barbers. The surgeon-barbers were quite aware of this, and lost no opportunity of winning over a clever barber-surgeon to their camp. While the Faculty of Medicine was priming all its guns against Harvey, in the matter of the circulation of blood, (fourteen years' expenditure of powder without a single shot to the credit of the Faculty,) the surgeons were devising a compromise with the

barbers; and at length, in the middle of the seventeenth century, their compromise resolved itself into a complete surrender. They petitioned the barbers, 'le bonnet à la main,' to be received among them. The barbers were willing, and Parliament—more and more mystified by each successive change in the phases of this interminable quarrel—ratified the union.

It was a union to the gain of both parties. The surgeons of St.-Côme had a college, and wore the long gown, and gave degrees, and were beginning to be persons in society. But their ambitious 'Latinisators' had no great skill with the scalpel, and were daily losing renown as operators. The best operators were found among the barber-surgeons. The barber-surgeons, on the other hand, had no college; they did not speak Latin, and in the social scale their place was a very humble one. Their new union with the surgeons associated them with gentlemen who talked Latin, and elevated them thereby to the rank of *savants*,—so far as the title might be given to persons who 'worked with their hands.'

No sooner had Parliament ratified the union—devoutly hoping that here at last was an end to the wranglings of three centuries—than the Faculty turned out with horse, foot and artillery, determined

once for all to put the fear of heaven into the surgeons. This time, in fact, the aim and end of the Faculty was nothing less than the demolition and annihilation of the adversary. It was a five-years' war, lasting from 1655 to 1660. The Faculty attacked every right and privilege which had either been conferred upon or had been invented by the surgeons. There was no boggling as to the object, which was utterly to destroy the independence of surgeons and barbers both. 'We cannot prevent there being surgeons at Saint-Côme,' said Guy Patin, the chief combatant in the ranks of the Faculty, 'nor can we prevent them from forming a league with the barbers. What we want is, that there should be, as heretofore, one company or society of surgeon-barbers, dependent on, and drawing their authority from, our Faculty, tendering the oath of fidelity every year in our schools, and paying the customary fees.'

In reality, and under every consideration of justice, the position adopted by the Faculty towards its opponents was untenable and ridiculous. For the Faculty was not a surgical body; it had absolutely no experience of surgery on the practical side; it had no wish to acquire such experience; not one individual of the order would have handled, upon any consideration whatever, the knife of the

demonstrator in the dissecting-room; and it heartily and wholly despised, not indeed the solid benefits of the art, but each and all of its exponents, as 'de pauvres diables indignes de cirer les bottes d'un médecin,' because their profession required them to 'work with their hands.'

But the unjust cause prevailed. The luckless Parliament (servile in general, it must be confessed, in the interests of the Faculty), compelled to give judgment, pronounced roundly for the plaintiffs. It was a decision which stripped the surgeons bare. They were placed once more under the complete control of the Faculty, and everything was taken from them. They were to have no college, to confer no degrees, to wear neither cap nor gown. 'Rien ne distinguait plus leur communanté,' says M. Franklin, 'des plus humbles corporations ouvrières.'

The eighteenth century was to show the struggle under a different aspect, but at this point we may pause a moment to glance at another very ancient cause of quarrel between the surgeons and the Faculty of Medicine. Mention has been made of the permission granted by the Faculty to the barbers, to purchase from the gallows a corpse for dissection. Such monopoly as existed in these commodities was in the hands of, and very jealously guarded by, the medical body; and, as far as it lay

in the power of the doctors, the surgeon-barbers were 'kept out of corpses.'

During a long period it was held a profane act to open or carve a dead body for any purpose of science; and in 1300, Boniface VIII. issued a bull condemning 'all anatomical dissections not sanctioned by the Holy See.' Popular prejudice supported the Church in this matter, and an Italian surgeon, Mundini de Luzzi, was considered a very bold man for having ventured, fifteen years after the edict of Boniface, to dissect two corpses in public. The result of Luzzi's observations, published with certain curious engravings in 1478, remained, with the writings of Hippocrates and Galen, the sole guide of the anatomist for at least a century beyond that date. Mundini himself, it is said, had some qualms of conscience over his task; he would operate only on the corpses of women, and did not dare to dissect the head, 'for fear of committing a mortal sin.'

In fourteenth century France the faculty of Montpellier dissected 'one corpse a year.' The legal authorities of the town had instructions from the king to deliver to the doctors once a year 'a person condemned to death, of whatever sex or religion.'

In Paris, needless to say, the Faculty of Medicine controlled the very scanty supply of fruits from the gallows and the block. It is curious, by the way,

that during so many ages in which so many victims were so lightly turned over to the public executioner, the general sentiment should have revolted so strongly from the handling of these victims after death by persons who had a merely scientific and humanitarian interest in the task. To take life was a small matter enough, and crowds would flock to the cruel spectacle of breaking on the wheel, burning or even flaying alive; but to unsling a murderer's corpse from the gibbet, and deliver it to a man of science for the instruction of students in a classroom, was regarded as something worse than uncanny, it was a deed almost unholy and accursed.

The Faculty must be absolved from all charge or suspicion of abusing its privilege in this matter. It had small use for the corpses, which not a doctor in Paris would have touched with the point of a knife; and it strove hard to keep them from the persons who most needed them. From about the sixteenth century, the surgeons attached to the Châtelet gave a course of lectures annually to the midwives of Paris, which included 'une anatomie de femme.' The allowance of the Faculty to the students in its own schools was two bodies in the year, which were supplied by the 'lieutenant criminel,' and the utmost seems to have been made of these solemn opportunities. The beadle summoned

all the masters and their students, and if the Faculty chanced to be on passably good terms with the surgeons and barbers, they also were bidden to the ceremony. In any case, some skilled surgeon or barber was necessary for the practical part of the demonstration, since no doctor would compromise his dignity (or discover his ineptitude) by touching the body.

It is clear, however, that the surgeon who meant to keep his hand in was not to be fobbed off with a paltry provision of two corpses per annum,—which, indeed, he very seldom got a stroke at. What followed? The headsman of Paris, or the gentleman who instructed him, knew well enough. It was mainly the affair of a little oiling of the palm. For a price agreed upon, the executioner, with or without the connivance of the *greffier criminel*, would either dispose of the body on which justice had been done, or would arrange that it should be stolen from the scaffold. So, on the day of an execution by hanging or beheading, if a plot of this kind had been contrived, you might see a little knot of students mingling in the crowd on the Place de Grève, who, when the axe had fallen or the hemp had done its work, would storm the scaffold and bear away the spoil. More probably, however, the act would be accomplished after dark. M. Franklin describes 'the

celebrated Vésale' creeping around the gallows of Montfaucon in the night and disputing with the birds of prey the remains of the malefactors swinging in chains. Not infrequently, surgeons and students braved the penalties of sacrilege by rifling the graves in the cemeteries.

Instigated by the Faculty, Parliament passed law after law to prohibit or to check the illicit traffic in corpses, not perceiving or indifferent to the fact that the supply accorded to the surgeons and students was absurdly smaller than the study of their art rendered necessary. Of course the favour of a king could procure at any time for his chief surgeon or barber a present of this sort from the Châtelet or the Conciergerie (where they had usually a convenient corpse or two), and an operator of Paré's eminence might contrive now and then to have such an offering delivered at his door; but for the eager student who had no friend at court there was little choice other than a surreptitious bargain with the hangman, or a still more surreptitious visit to the graveyard.

But the tribulation of the surgeons was gradually drawing to its term. The 'terrible decree' of 1660 had by no means proved their death-blow; M. Franklin indeed has no difficulty in showing that it was, as he states, 'un premier advantage' gained over their arrogant rival.

'The fusion of the surgeons with the barbers being complete and absolute, the Faculty had lost the resource of setting one class against the other. It had now to contend with a body stronger, more numerous, and richer than before . . . . and henceforth it was with the chief surgeon of the king that swords must be crossed. Again, moreover, that ancient prejudice which had depreciated every description of manual labour was beginning to lose ground, thanks mainly to the growing influence of those able men whom the corporation of barbers had produced. That corporation was soon to enjoy the countenance and support of Royalty itself, which had remained so far an indifferent spectator of the struggle.'

Up to the reign of Louis XIV., surgery had never achieved at Court one of those signal successes which command admiration and impose respect. It was reserved for 'le Grand Monarque,' in his own august person, to submit to a great and important test the skill of the despised profession. Louis XIV. was, beyond question, the most powerful and the most splendid sovereign by whom the destinies of France had been controlled. Absolute master of his people; a fear to all his foes; slavishly courted by men, and almost as slavishly adored by women,

'worshipped and incensed above a god,' no glory of man seemed ever to have equalled his.

If, observed Bossuet on one occasion, He who reigned on high felt any pleasure in subjecting kings to law, what better occasion could present itself for an exhibition of His power! M. Franklin makes the dry rejoinder, that the Almighty seems to have yielded to the temptation; for, early in the year 1686, *le roi soleil* took to his bed with a most distressing malady.

The nature of the disease, together with the remedies proposed before the king's chief surgeon declared decisively in favour of an operation, may be passed over here. The surgeon, Félix, seems to have known from the first what would be necessary, but the Court was aghast at the notion of a surgical operation on Louis the magnificent, and it was not resolved upon until the resources of quackery had been exhausted. The king himself appears to have been under very little deception throughout, and in the end he resigned himself with exemplary fortitude to the hands of his surgeon.

The operation which was performed—in the presence of Madame de Maintenon, père La Chaise, the king's confessor, his physician in chief, and 'quatre apothicaires'—was entirely successful; and it may

be noted, as an extreme example of the sycophantism which surrounded Louis, that the malady which had been destroyed in him became the fashion at Court! Everyone boasted that he had it (in truth, it was not a matter either for vaunting or for blushing), and those who were really afflicted betook themselves proudly to Félix, and called for 'the Great Operation, —the one you performed on his Majesty.'

The king was not ungrateful for the good he had received. Félix was enriched by the amount of three hundred thousand livres and an estate, and was advanced to the rank of a nobleman. It is scarcely too much to say that the whole profession to which he belonged rose in his wake. Louis created a chair of surgery at the Jardin des Plantes (where schools of chemistry, botany, and history were already established), and interested himself in the first appointment. In a nominal sense the edict of 1660 remained in force, but with the establishment of the chair at the Jardin des Plantes the surgeons recommenced their public lectures at Saint-Côme; the royal favour had set the ball at their feet again, and the Faculty began to be in eclipse. A munificent legacy enabled the surgeons to build a substantial amphitheatre adjoining Saint-Côme, surmounted by a royal crown, and over the door of which this verse was read:—

'Ad cædes hominum prisca amphitheatra patebant, ut discant longum vivere nostra patent.'

(The amphitheatres of old were opened to take men's lives; ours to preserve them.)

New statutes came into existence in 1699, under one clause of which it was enacted that 'persons engaged in the practice of surgery pure and simple shall be regarded as following a liberal art, and shall enjoy all those privileges which the liberal arts bestow.' Here indeed was a progress from the days when the barber-surgeon, at the sign of the three basins, was dubbed no better than a tinker.

The humbler practitioners nevertheless continued to be very small fry, living meanly, scarcely above the rank of the poorer shopkeepers, and called upon for a variety of duties which had little or nothing in common with surgery. Their apprentices had a dour time of it (except when they could slip away on a racket with the students), meanly fed and miserably lodged, and generally expected to double the *rôles* of *savant* and shop-boy. Up at cock-crow, the lad swept and opened the shop, and stood in wait on the door-step to blandish the early labourer who might be disposed for the luxury of a shave. From eleven or twelve until two or three in the afternoon, he scoured the town in attendance on clients whose beards and wigs must be dressed in their own cham-

bers, or who needed other services. Then back to the shop, where, if he fell asleep over a book, the little bell above the street door would soon interrupt his slumbers. If his master were called up at night the apprentice was probably despatched in his stead. Classes in surgery were sometimes held at four in the morning, for the benefit of apprentices whose employers grudged them every working hour of the day. Still, the apprentices had youth on their side, and, like the students of the University, they did not pass for a melancholy tribe.

The early years of the eighteenth century saw the surgeons still playing up to win. On the death of Félix in 1703, the office of chief surgeon was given to Maréchal, who continued to hold it in the reign of Louis XV. A gifted man and resolute for his profession, Maréchal induced the young king to create five new professorships at Saint-Côme, with five new courses of public lectures. This was a bold affront to the enemy; and the Faculty, whose wrath had been too long contained, at last exploded. The new Louis had a good deal less of the Jove in him than the old one, and so much the less inviolate were his decrees. The Faculty led off with a rather ludicrous assault upon the doors of Saint-Côme, marching in full robes behind the *doyen*, who carried a skeleton in both arms. Admission was demanded in the

great name of the Faculty of Medicine, but the doctors were received with such a thunder of laughter by the surgeons and students at every window of the college that they turned back in rage and confusion.

Next, remembering their ancient and worthy friend, the Parliament, they lodged a tremendous appeal with their worships. But in this quarter they fared no better; the Faculty that had been invincible was nonsuited on every count. A ruder blow was to follow, and in 1731 the Faculty beheld in impotence the elevation of the surgeons, those 'contemptible mechanics,' to the dignity of an Academy.

Even this was not the worst. Twelve years later a royal decree restored to the community of surgeons every right and privilege of which the Parliament's judgment in 1660 had deprived them; they were joined to the University of Paris; declared a 'learned body;' and the last link was severed in the chain which had bound them to the Faculty of Medicine. And here, in a word, the struggle ends.

Some thirty years from this the old Faculty died of inanition—not precisely in a garret, but in some forlorn tenement which the corporation of lawyers had abandoned—and the new Faculty which rose upon its ruins was sheltered in the sumptuous building inscribed: 'Académie Royale de Chirurgie'!

During the Revolution, both societies were involved in the fanatical and stupid edict which suppressed all 'congrégations laïques'; 1794 saw them re-instated; and they were incorporated in the Imperial University in 1808. From that date, Saints Côme and Damien, the patron saints of the surgeon, and St. Luke, the patron saint of medicine, have dwelt together as saints should do.

THE CHASE: FROM CHARLEMAGNE TO LOUIS XIV.

THEY understood the chase in Gaul before the imperial days of Charlemagne. All the Merovingian kings hunted the wolf, the boar and the stag; and all the wide forests of Gaul were their hunting-ground. Elsewhere the chase was unrestricted to their subjects, but the sportsman risked his neck whose quarry lured him upon king's land. Already the rules of the regal pastime were getting formulated, and to Childebert II. are ascribed by some the rude beginnings of the art and science of venery. Another Nimrod of this era was Dagobert I., 'probably,' says M. Jullien in *La Chasse*, 'the greatest hunter of all the Merovingians,' with a vast stud of horses, and kennels filled with dogs of many breeds. Of the stock of the Merovingians, too, was that great killer of game in the steep Ardennes, canonised long since as the patron saint of sport in

France, Hubert himself. Hubert is no myth of a half-forgotten age. His father, Bertrand, Duke of Aquitaine (or of Guienne), a descendant of Clotaire I., was a person of distinction; while as for Hubert, the Saint Hubert that should be, he seems to have been easily first among the bloods of this day, 'devoted in equal measure,' says a French biographer, 'to the worship of Diana, of Venus, and of Mars.' Warrior, and courtier, and a sportsman from crown to heels, the days of his youth foreshadowed none of the austerities which distinguished his career in the Church. We have no record of any 'bag' of his in the Ardennes, teeming at that date with game and great quarry; but here it was that his hunting-knife and spear found their chief employment, and the same forest of the Ardennes was the theatre of Hubert's strange conversion to the faith. The legend is in harmony with the scene, and as credible as other legends of like nature. Riding through the forest one day, with his people and his hounds, Hubert found himself confronted in a solitary place by a stag which bore a crucifix enlaced between its horns, and a voice called to him:

'Know that, unless thou comest forthwith to Christ, thou shalt presently fall and perish in hell.'

Moved at once to admiration and to fear, Hubert

leaped from his horse, and having done homage on his face to the cross, declared that he would quit the world for ever and devote himself utterly to the faith. And, some testimony to the contrary notwithstanding, it appears that he severed himself from the Court, and sought shelter with St. Lambert, bishop of Maestricht (A.D. 683), whom he succeeded in the first years of the eighth century. Later, he transferred the episcopal see to Liège, and is supposed to have died at Varen, near Brussels, in the year 730. Such is the legend of St. Hubert, whose name French sportsmen have invoked for above a thousand years.

When Charlemagne had come to the throne—himself a royal hunter, if ever there were such—the chase was the nation's pastime. 'It would be hard to find in any part of the world,' says the historian Eginhard, who was Charlemagne's secretary, 'a people worthy to be compared with the Franes in this respect.' The royal forests were rigidly preserved, and the counts of the empire had exclusive hunting rights within their own domains; but with these reservations, almost everyone might hunt or hawk at pleasure. Field sports, in a word, had not yet passed into a privilege of the king and the titled classes. To the clergy, indeed, they were forbidden under the capitularies of Charlemagne, but to every

abbot and monk who could get across a horse that prohibition remained a dead letter. Exceptions were made by the emperor in favour of the abbeys of St. Denis, near Paris, and St. Bertin de St. Omer, for the curious reason that the monks required certain skins for 'gloves, girdles and book-bindings.'

Charlemagne, who dazzled in everything he did, conducted his hunts on a scale of magnificence. The pomp of the Cæsars was in his equipage, and his train included lions and leopards. One of the finest horsemen of his age, he was said to 'ride anything and anywhere,' and his fleet German hounds were not often lost sight of. All his recreation was taken in the saddle, and he liked his empress and princesses to ride with him in costumes which excited the wonder of the people. Four chief officers had the charge of his stables and kennels, a chief falconer superintended the immense aviary which sheltered the birds of prey, and the whole establishment of the hunt obeyed the orders of the seneschal and constable of the court.

Although the fox was hunted, and in a style not unlike the modern English, this was almost the only form of the chase which resembled our own. The larger and fiercer creatures, bear, wolf and boar, were the favourite quarry; and there were various ways of taking them, It was considered fair sport,

for instance, to snare or dig pits for big game of all kinds, and to spear or kill with darts from a safe eminence the boar which had been driven into an *impasse;* but the chase with hounds was always the most in vogue, and few sportsmen shunned the moment of danger, when the short sword or hunting-knife was called for. If hunting were the principal pastime of old France, it was also a mode of training for war; and this was one reason why, at a later age, it was strictly denied to the non-military classes.

Of the third or Capetian race the first hunter of renown was the able and vigorous Philippe-Auguste, who, not content with the huge forests of his predecessors, set the fashion of hunting-parks, new enclosures for the breeding and preservation of game, which none but the king might penetrate. He it was who surrounded with walls the noble wood of Vincennes, after he had well stocked it with deer and roebuck. By-and-bye the king's example began to be imitated by the more powerful of the feudal aristocracy, so that, not the woods and forests only, but great stretches of rich land which the husbandman should have tilled were seized upon and made fastnesses for sport. Hunting and war: these (if we except his rather violent performances in love) were the sole concerns of the mediæval noble; and in the

intervals of fighting, hunting was a kind of madness of the age. All occupation which had for its object either the immediate support of life, or the maintenance of trade and commerce, was despised, and a fierce and almost totally unlettered aristocracy killed its abundant leisure by killing prodigious quantities of game. It was the chase which, as much perhaps as any other institution, kept the great classes and the lesser classes apart, and lifted the former to such a height above the latter; while the enforced idleness—as regarded cultivation—of ever increasing tracts of country, came in time to be a terrible grievance of the nation. The *garennes* or warrens of the puissant and ruthless nobles spared neither arable land nor water-course; they had warrens for deer, warrens for hares, and warrens for water-fowl; as early as the twelfth century France was being overrun by them, and every new *garenne* that was enclosed made life harder, by making food scarcer, for the poor. The *trouvéres*, those wandering voices of the middle ages, ever echoing the plaints of the people, luckless thralls of duke, count or baron, have a great deal to say concerning those rights of the chase, which were so literally the wrongs of all to whom the chase was denied.

The author of the 'Roman du Renard,' painting the existence of the owner of a feudal manor, gives

hunting the foremost place among his occupations. At early morn he rouses an antlered stag in his forest lair, and presently an arrow brings the victim to his knees, when the hounds rush in to complete the kill. A tough old boar is next put up, who rips four dogs before the huntsman can get in to spear him; and the chase fares on again.

No didactic treatise on the subject appeared in France earlier than the reign of St. Louis. The first was the anonymous 'La Chasse dou Cerf,' a work of no small erudition, and one which the sportsman of a scholarly turn would read with pleasure at this day. From this it is learned that owners of large packs hunted the wild boar most commonly in winter, the hare during Lent (and not, one may presume, on a fasting stomach), when the weather was dry and fresh, to keep the dogs in training for the swifter sport of following the stag in the latter days of spring.

Under St. Louis and under Philippe IV. (le Bel), although the royal forests and the seigneurial warrens were as strictly preserved as ever, and the poacher was rudely dealt with, the laws of the chase pressed less heavily upon the untitled classes; and under Charles IV. (1322-28) every subject of the king had liberty to hunt on open ground. The nobles resisted and spread their warrens wider,

until at last Parliament took the popular cause in hand. It was time; for the nobles threatened to enmesh all France within their hunting-nets. It was not to be expected that Parliament would be over-bold in the matter, but something was gained for 'natural rights' by the decree that warrens should be suppressed in cases where the owners could not make good a claim of immemorial usage 'per se et suos predecessores.' In 1355, Jean II. (le Bon) ordered that no warren should continue to be held which had been acquired in his own or his father's reign, and under the two-fold ban of Parliament and the Crown these illegal preserves began slowly to disappear, though the struggle with the nobles was wearisome and long.

For the chase in every form was still the passion of the age. Jean II. was devoted to it, and so great was his establishment that every stag his hounds accounted for cost the monarch a goodly sum. The wealthy seigneurs vied with one another in the extent and quality of their equipages, and the less wealthy made an equal display by joining their packs together. The ladies, the 'hautes et puissantes dames,' were as keen as any for 'la chasse;' the hardier among them, 'on palfreys richly caparisoned,' says Jullien, followed the wild-boar or the stag, but most of the sex gave preference to the

milder sport of hawking. Europe was ransacked for sporting dogs, and horses were fetched out of the East; and the present of a fine steed or a hound or two of noted breed was exceedingly esteemed. The clergy, careless of correction, hunted with the rest of the world, and the rich abbot kennelled his pack within the monastery wall. Gace de la Bigue, chaplain to Jean II., and the author of a volume of sporting verse, avowed himself 'un chasseur fort ardent.' Charles VI. sends Bajazet a present of goshawks and falcons, with gloves sewn with pearls for the birds to perch on; and at about the same time the Duc de Bourgogne ransoms the famous Comte de Nevers from the same emperor by a gift of twelve white falcons.

Among many sportsmen of greater or less renown in the fourteenth century the name of Gaston de Foix flashes from the page of history with a lustre peculiarly its own. Gaston Phœbus, Count of Foix and of Béarn, 'amiable, gallant, handsome, rich, well-lettered, and intrepid,' played a large part in the politics of his age. Charles VI. appointed him governor of Languedoc; his valour preserved him always independent, and he is described as having held in check the Kings of France, Spain, England and Aragon. He said of himself that if he were not the first cavalier of his age, and the most

successful lover, he had at least no rival *en matière de chasse*. According to Jullien, his kennels never contained fewer than sixteen hundred dogs, 'carefully selected and perfectly trained;' and it is recorded that on the day of his death, at sixty years of age, he slew a bear in the woods of Sauve-Terre. He left an unfinished work on his beloved pastime, entitled 'Les Déduits* de la Chasse aux Bestes Sauvaiges,' which contains the naive assertion that since the true sportsman is never idle, he has not time for evil thoughts or evil actions, and must therefore at his death go straight from earth to Paradise.

Great also among the great hunters of the middle ages was that redoubtable sovereign, Louis XI., who had 'legions of dogs, falcons, huntsmen and falconers.' Considerable as were the sums which many of his predecessors on the throne had lavished upon sport, the expenditure of Louis (a mean man in ordinary) was magnificent. One knows how little this most astute of monarchs neglected affairs of state, but apart from politics he cared for nothing but the chase, and he wanted all France for his hunting-ground. One of the earliest acts of his reign was to forbid the chase to every man, woman and child in his kingdom; there was not game enough in the rich extent of France to serve

* 'Pleasures.'

the king's own pleasure. Nets and all other implements of hunting were ordered to be seized and publicly burned, and the king himself looked on at the burning of the whole hunting-tackle of the sire de Montmorency, whose guest he was at the time. He bade the hangman slit the ears of a gentleman of humble means, whose offence had been the snaring of a hare on his own ground. Not without reason might bishop Claude of Seissel say in Louis's life-time that it was safer to kill a man than a deer.

Boar and wolf delighted him, but he loved above everything to follow the deer, and this was the sport he excelled in. He would ride a grand horse, says Commines, cost what it might; dogs were sought out for him everywhere, and 'he would pay well for them.' Out early, and caring nothing for any stress of weather, the king's whole day was often spent in the saddle; he would return at night tired out, and generally, observes Commines, 'in a very bad temper with somebody.'

An insatiable hunter to the end, the terrible Louis had his bedroom converted into a kind of cock-pit during the malady that sent him to the grave. Unable to mount into the saddle, unable even to walk, he would still have the show or shadow of a hunt within the four walls of his bed-room. Commissaries were sent to Rouen and other villages,

with instructions to assemble all the dogs in the market-place, and to choose from them the best ratters. These were despatched to the château of Plessis-les-Tours, and loosed upon the rats and mice in the chamber of the dying king, who was propped upon pillows to watch the sport. It was one of his last injunctions that he should be represented on his tomb, not old, but in the prime of life, dressed in his hunter's habit, with his horn slung across him, and his dog upon his knees.

In the succeeding reign, that of Charles VIII., the nobles had their *droits de chasse* restored to them. His majesty shone as a falconer, and for his choicest birds of prey—gerfalcons from the north of Germany, falcons from Tunis, goshawks from Armenia, Persia, Greece or Africa—he paid on occasions eight hundred crowns apiece, an enormous sum considering the rarity of specie. Charles was moreover an amateur of the literature of falconry, and charged his reader, Guillaume Tardif, to compare everything that had been written on the subject, and write a new treatise. Tardif's own work must have been a labour of love, for it was done with extraordinary care and fulness; a treasure of knowledge on the whole art of falconry, which every lover of that art consulted during centuries. He omits no detail as to the choosing of the best varieties of birds, their breeding, rearing,

and training, and the means of keeping them in condition. A reader of the work at this day would almost be tempted to try his skill at the forgotten pastime.

To fly your bird for the mere pleasure of flying it was esteemed a more excellent sport than hawking with a view to furnishing the table. The goshawk, a bird not rare in old France, easily tamed, and easily managed, was the favourite with those who went a-hawking to keep the larder in small game. It took but a narrow flight, and was a good killer of pheasant, partridge, hare and rabbit. But the goshawk was rather despised by the ardent falconer of the middle ages. Let him fly the eagle, the falcon, or the lanner-hawk; more difficult to obtain, and far more difficult to domesticate and to train; creatures loving the wide and open plain; and needing for their fit maintenance and management in the aviary a large and experienced personnel, and men on horse-back to follow their splendid courses in the air. Old French writers on falconry divided the sport into two chief branches, the *haute volerie* and the *basse volerie*. The first was the swoop of the falcon or gerfalcon on the crane, heron, or kite; the second included the taking of pheasants, partridges, quails, larks, hares and rabbits, by the falcon, goshawk or sparrow-hawk.

With rarely an exception, king after king upon the throne of France continued to lead the way in sport. To that just monarch, Louis XII., the 'Father of his People' (who was not ashamed to say, 'I would rather my subjects laughed at my economics than wept over my extravagances'), succeeded the prodigal Francis I., whose gaudy Court foregathered often for the chase. Tents and tent-bearers went with the gallant company to the field, and a Gargantuan feast was spread in the intervals of hunting. When Francis hunted and when Francis dined, the dames of his court were at his elbow (we have met them in the too-confiding pages of Brantôme): what revels passed in the glades of Dampierre, of Limours, of Rochefort, of Chantilly, of Jarnac, of Chinon, and of Compiègne! The hunting equipage of Francis was gorgeous beyond doubt, but was it not also just a little circus-like? We read, at all events, of 'fifty chariots, with six horses to each chariot,' which served merely for the conveyance of the tents and tent-poles; and there was a Captain of the Tents, 'a gentleman of Normandy,' who had under him 'six valets in charge of bloodhounds, twelve mounted huntsmen, and his lieutenant.' During the reign of Francis the office of Grand Falconer seems to have been one of the highest in France, and this and every other chief appointment

in connection with the chase was invariably bestowed upon a nobleman. The cost of the aviary alone in this reign was 'thirty-six thousand livres' a year, 'without the salary of the Grand Falconer.' It was not for nothing that Francis would be styled the 'Père des Veneurs.' A consummate huntsman himself, his passion for the sport increased with age, and Jullien describes the last months of his life as 'une succession de chasses non interrompues.' The same authority states that Henry VIII. sent his brother of France in 1525 a present of 'twenty hackneys, and a pack of a hundred dogs, including several of immense size and the purest breed.'

Since everyone talked sport at the court of Francis, his son, the young duc d'Orléans, who was to succeed him on the throne, could hardly escape the mode. As a matter of fact, Henri II. became, under the tuition of that brilliant amazon, Diane de Poitiers, one of the finest chasseurs of his day. Who better than Diane could have taught the budding king every secret of the royal pastime? Beautiful, and bright, and infinitely bewitching, and not exactly bashful, she was ever at his side; and while Montmorency and the Guises played tricks with the State, Henri and Diane were beating up the game in every royal forest. Widow as she was, and nearly twenty years the senior of her royal

lover (Henri II. was born in 1518 and Diane de Poitiers towards the close of 1499) it is certain that she kept his heart to the last. She had the secrets of beauty and of health; rose at five in the morning, and bathed in cold water (an uncommon exercise at that epoch), was in the saddle betimes, and rested among her books when she returned from hunting. In the afternoon or early evening she was ready to tire another horse. To her beautiful Château d'Anet, filled with statues and trophies of the chase, the king came often; and seldom did he go away empty of game, for the château was set amid very choice preserves, and you may be sure that Diane knew how to keep them furnished.

Francis II., Marie Stuart's husband, a weakling, who came to the throne at sixteen and was in his grave at eighteen, had rather at any time stay at home than go a-hawking or a-hunting; but when Catherine de Medicis was in power, during the minority of Charles IX., the horn was heard about the woods again, for there was no make-believe in the Queen-mother's ardour for the chase. Had she not lived, as the wife of the Duc d'Orléans, at the Court of Francis I.? Catherine in the saddle was not less fair to look upon than her bold rival Diane de Poitiers, and report of a gallant kind has credited her with a new fashion of sitting her horse, the

better to display one of the best-shaped legs in France. When her husband mounted the throne as Henri II., and was in Diane's leash, Catherine still went with him to the hunt; scarcely touched by jealousy, she affected to believe that the liaison had no deeper significance than a community of interest in sport.

With the power in her own hands on the premature death of Francis II., Catherine's zest of political intrigue took her but little from the pleasures of the field. All the Medicis loved a touch of purple in their doings, and Catherine's ordering of the chase gave a new éclat to the court; her 'Florentine fêtes' and 'Venetian soirées,' if imitated from the huge hunting-banquets of the 'Père des Veneurs,' were far more elegant diversions. An amazon in the saddle, she was also a first-rate markswoman; and the cross-bow she was accustomed to carry on her walks was a weapon of precision in her hands.

No sportsman as yet carried firearms, which were heard for the first time on the covert-side while Charles IX. was king, It is not recorded of Charles that he practised among the bucks and pheasants for his shooting of Huguenots from the balcony of the Louvre on Bartholomew's Day, but he was a finished sportsman in all traditional and approved

respects. Masson describes him as 'vrai prince de la chasse.' Hunting, indeed, had been the sole profession of a boyhood and youth which the Queen-mother, Catherine, had jealously excluded, not only from participation in but from knowledge of the affairs of France; and from the day of his accession the king never wearied of the pastime which had absorbed the prince. Even in the field, however, instances were not wanting of that crooked and cruel spirit which the callous mother fostered in her son, till she had fitted him to be her instrument and scapegoat in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. When game was to seek (a rare occurrence, happily), he would set his dogs to worry horses, sheep and cattle; he would even, with his own weapon, strike off the heads of pigs and asses. In such a fit of imbecile passion, he turned his spear one day against a mule belonging to one of his favourite companions, M. de Saussac. 'Sire,' said the nobleman, 'what cause of quarrel can have arisen between my mule and you?' A dark, mysterious, morbid spirit, not without temptings to goodness, but warped and defeated utterly by the dreadful memory of Bartholomew, Charles IX. died, 'épuisé par des fatigues incessantes,' scarcely twenty-four years of age. A past master of venery, it was his last ambition to transmit to posterity the fruit of his experiences with

hawk and hound, but the monograph, 'La Chasse Royale,' which he began to dictate to M. de Villeroy, ended abruptly with the twenty-seventh chapter. A crowd of other treatises on sport appeared in this reign, among which the 'Vénerie' of du Fouilloux has lived in approbation.

The energetic pleasures of the chase were not for Henri III., who liked better to dress himself in woman's clothes, and with whom the line of the Valois perished in just contempt; but it was a fair day for sport when the sturdy and jocund Béarnais, Henri IV., first and finest of the Bourbons, took in the teeth of the Ligue the throne he had inherited from St. Louis. King of Navarre before he was king of France, he had sucked in the air of mountains from childhood; his father, Antoine de Bourbon, duc de Vendôme, had reared him like any tough little 'enfant du pays;' and to such a bringing-up he owed that frame and temperament 'si mâle, si vigoureux,' and that determined gaiety of heart which was never in eclipse. To an ebullient Navarre, all sinew and quicksilver, and never in repose but when he was in action, the toils and hazards of hunting were a necessity of life. No sooner had he reduced Paris, and become the master of his capital, than he took horse for a four days' hunt at Melun; and later, when the treaty of Vervins had assured him the kingdom of

France, he gave his council a fortnight's holiday and paid a round of hunting visits in the environs of Paris. He would follow with avidity any kind of quarry (he always said those partridges were sweetest which his own falcon had taken), but give him for choice the hunt which had a spice of danger in it; bear, wolf, or boar. Saint-Germain, Monceaux, Folembray, Chantilly and Villers-Cotterêts saw the king often at one season or another, but Fontainebleau, where every glade and thicket was alive with game, was his best-loved residence. This splendid habitation of Francis I. and Henri II., the prodigal Béarnais embellished yet more extravagantly in the interests of his hunt. The great buildings enclosing the court of the White Horse contained a kennel of one hundred and fifty toises in extent—'almost a palace,' says Jullien—and his packs had the services of 'one hundred and sixty valets de chiens.' The aviary housed 'thousands of birds of prey.' The best horses France could breed being too slow for the impetuous Henri, he sent to England for fleeter ones. 'In accordance with his Majesty's instructions,' writes Jullien, 'Quinterot, a famous jockey of that time, went to England frequently, to purchase there for the service of the French Court some very expensive horses.'

Small wonder that we find minister Sully com-

plaining of the rate at which the money went. What else could a minister do, careful of the deniers of the State, when he found the king was lavishing every year on 'building, gaming, women, and hunting-dogs, a sum large enough to maintain 'fifteen thousand foot-soldiers.' 'I could not keep silent on the subject,' he adds, 'at the risk of incurring his Majesty's anger.' But Henri, though sometimes pinched for a dinner at home, could never be persuaded to stay his hand when the kennels were in question.

This monstrous outlay was not, however, altogether for display. Henri of Navarre wanted the best and costliest equipage that a sportsman might have,—but it was that he might enjoy thereby, and in the fullest possible degree, all that the chase was capable of yielding. If you must hunt three times a day, as Henri IV. not rarely did, you must have the best of horses and the best of hounds, and plenty of both.

The king was not above the foible which all tradition lays at the sportsman's door; he liked to talk of, and perhaps to magnify, his 'bag,'—'se plaisait,' says a French historian, 'à parler de ses succès.' His ministers were regaled with little histories of yesterday's famous exploits in the forest, and the passionate hunter is discovered now in a

sage epistle on affairs, and now in an amorous *billet*. His Nimrod's fame had spread to our own fog-smitten coasts, and Sully notes that when he was ambassador in London, James I. put many questions to him thereupon. More than this, the first of the Stuarts wrote to Henri entreating him to send over some French *veneurs* capable of instructing his own huntsmen in the art of taking the stag with blood-hounds,—perhaps the only instance in history where England seeks French aid in a matter of sport.

In France, Henri IV. has survived as the type of the *roi chasseur;* and for this reason, no doubt, as Jullien thinks, his memory has carried reproaches which certain of his predecessors on the throne, not less culpable than he, have escaped. His revision of the celebrated 'Code des Chasses' was not managed, to be sure, in a spirit the most generous, but the least generous of its clauses had the sanction of tradition and of the age. At the death of Henri III.—who, though no sportsman, was a hard law-giver in sport, in the interests solely of the 'classes'—the chase in its every branch remained, with few and rare exceptions, the exclusive privilege of the nobility and of the bourgeois 'vivant noblement.' The 'veritable school of war' from the end

of the fourteenth century, successive kings of France were resolved that *la chasse* should be reserved to the military caste. Hence, from one generation to another, those harsh enactments to the prejudice of labourers, artisans, and the whole orders of 'gens méchaniques et roturiers,' mechanic and vulgar folk,—of all, in a word, who were not called upon to carry arms in the king's defence. The 'Code' adroitly put it that the lively pleasures of the chase, easily seducing the simple from their 'proper cares,' and as easily degenerating into a passion (most kings of France might have rendered oath on *this* point), could not but result in harm to the general weal if they were accorded freely to every subject of the king. But prescripts of this colour, which, whatever was pretended for them, had no real end but to keep the common folk from the coverts, were continually setting on edge the teeth of that innumerable class which could never, except by poaching, get a hare or a bird for the pot. And the restriction was the more unkind for this, that though king on the one side and nobles on the other might be hunting and hawking from cock-crow to curfew, game never lacked in France. Such tracts had been enclosed for hunting over the country's whole extent that the mere leakage from those immense preserves

would have fattened an army on ground game. But the rule ran, that if a peasant's dog, following him to the fields of a morning, killed any fur or feather that sportsmen hunted, the peasant must carry the spoil to the château.

The case as appertaining to field sports stood thus when Henri IV. reached the throne. If his own legislation on the subject be examined, it will appear that Henri was, in some important details, a reformer rather than an abettor of the old draconian code. Taking his stand upon the principles established by Francis I., he approved and maintained those physical penalties of prison, the pillory, and the whip which had been in force for generations; but he restricted their application to 'les personnes viles et abjectes, et non autres.' There remained the barbarous punishment of death, which the code of Francis enjoined in cases where a 'common person,' three times convicted and banished, broke his ban and was condemned a fourth time for the heinous offence of killing large game. It is clear that the death penalty for deer-slayers was little to the liking of Henri IV., for, while suffering it to remain upon the statute book, he declared its infliction 'facultatif,' or optional, on the part of the presiding judge, with an emphatic hint that there were such things as extenuating circumstances. One may conclude that

not many poachers of deer went to the gallows in Henri's time.

But he was severe upon his own officers of the hunt, and was for treating no better than a common poacher any negligent master of 'woods and waters,' any guard or overseer of the royal preserves who showed the smallest laxity in his business.

In 1600 he made the stag a royal quarry, prohibiting even the nobles from hunting it on their own lands. The following year he forbade the chase of the roebuck within a radius of three leagues from any royal forest.

Under the Valois kings the use of firearms in sport (though not quite unknown during the closing years of the dynasty) was strictly disallowed. The first plea was the dangerous character of the weapons, but a more substantial motive was the opposition encountered from nearly all sportsmen of the antique school. Force your prey with your hounds, face your tusker with spear or a mere hunting-knife at the critical moment, fly your falcon—trained with infinity of pains—at his proper game: this was the true sport, within the canons of du Fouilloux and the old masters. *La chasse* and *la fauconnerie*: these only were legitimate on French soil; what had powder and ball to do with these? But the firearm came on the scene, by stealth, as it were. Its use

once proved in battle, there were innovators on the field of sport who would put it to the test in the coverts. Then a new complaint: the gun would empty France of game. Nine out of ten among the older sportsmen opposed it, but the bloods of the rising era clamoured for the firearm, and it was made a vexed question for the later Valois.

Inevitably, it came for settlement before Henri IV., and that accomplished hunter, inclining always to the older rules of the game, which seemed at that date to furnish the better tests of skill and bravery in the field, wavered over the final word. He pronounced for the gun, and then forbade it; forbade it, and sanctioned it again. It was the one question in the whole arena of sport upon which his private mind was never quite resolved. But in 1604 he gave a definite edict in favour of the gun; and his last decree on the subject, issued three years later, modified the first one only to the extent that no game should be shot within three miles of the royal warrens. From this date, accordingly, the gun became a legal weapon of the chase in France. The new law, not afterwards modified, left the hunter where he was; but it spoiled the art of falconry. Louis XIII., Henri IV.'s successor, was the last king of France who went a-hawking in the old style, and who maintained an aviary for the pleasure of it.

Born at Saint-Germain-en-Laye in September, 1638, Louis XIV. succeeded to the throne in May, 1643. A king in childhood, he lacked during many years even the shadow of kingly power. His disabilities under Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarin were those of the young Charles IX. under Catherine de Medicis, and at twenty-two his kingdom of France was scarcely more to him than a pleasure-garden. But the future *roi soleil* was even then a very sparkling youth, the pink of fashion, excellent at games, a rare dancer, a neat shot, and a first-rate horseman. He had what the French call 'le talent des fêtes,' and was an incomparable promoter of picnics. At the age of thirteen he was learned in field sports, hawked a little at Vincennes, hunted and coursed incessantly at Versailles and Saint-Germain. Falconry he esteemed but lightly, and in France that pretty mode of sport dates its decline from this effulgent reign.

With the power in his hands, and with maturer years, Louis grew greatly more exclusive. He disliked hunting alone, but he disliked quite as much the attendance of a crowd. He had, within limits, a certain genuine taste in almost everything that took his interest, and it was never the flamboyant taste of Francis I. The chase had a kind of æsthetic or ornamental value for him, and a well-ordered

hunt was always in the programme of the festivities of the Court; but Louis XIV. was no trifler in the field, and true hunting days were quiet and business-like. He had Henri IV.'s disregard of weather, and would ride hour after hour in a pelting rain without knowing that he was wet. No king ever understood quite so well as Louis XIV. the art of always showing himself at his best; and when he understood that, good as he was after the hounds, he was a little better with the gun, he cultivated his marksmanship at the expense of his horsemanship. He carried his gun even when he went a-hawking, and, greatly to the chagrin of his falconers, he would bring down a pheasant or a heron before the falcon had had time to strike.

Henri IV., who never shot for the pleasure of shooting, and who seldom took a gun to the woods, sanctioned the firearm in the interests of his younger courtiers; Louis XIV. made it popular. A good and graceful shot, he handled the gun with delight; and nothing that Louis excelled in ever lacked an imitator at his Court.

But although, for his own pride and pleasure, he set the gun in the first place, and put horse and hounds in the second, and gave a poor third to the falcon which his ancestors had honoured, the hunt-establishment of Louis was lavishly and splendidly

equipped throughout. His aviary, which he hardly ever glanced into, and from which he took a falcon, perhaps, once in the twelvemonth, was the richest in Europe. He had never fewer than eighty hunters in his stables, and the blood was the best that the century could produce. The royal kennels at Versailles and at Marly were not wide enough to contain his foxhounds, his staghounds, his greyhounds, his wolf-hounds, his harriers, and his setters At the age of sixty-two, he finds his favourite pack a little too swift for him, and gives an order at once for a slower one, at whatever price.

His preserves were maintained for him in the style of his kennels, his aviary, and his stables. Partridges and pheasants were reared by the thousand in every royal demesne; and his keepers kept the strictest note of all the big game in his forests.

The chief offices of Louis' hunt were posts of the highest distinction. His Grand Veneur, or Chief Huntsman, was the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, a comptroller after the king's own heart, who was sumptuously lodged 'in a kind of palace' at the kennels of Versailles (built at a cost of two hundred thousand crowns), where a table was always spread for the Court. The stables for the personal service of the Grand Veneur were so largely furnished that, when certain creditors were pressing for a settle-

ment, he could sell off sixty of his horses, 'sans en être gêné.' It needs no saying that the prodigal duke kept his Majesty's hunt on a famous footing, this indeed being the sole condition on which Louis would be served, for he was to the full as exacting in his sporting establishment as Henri IV. had been. We have a quaint picture of M. de la Rochefoucauld in 1709, when, too infirm to ride, he would be dragged after the hunt in a lumbering calèche, deaf and nearly blind, and swearing under his breath when hounds were checked.

They were all, or nearly all, blue-blooded in the service of the chase in this reign. M. de Villarceaux had charge of the foxhounds. M. de Verderonne was 'captain of the Scotch pack, hunting the hare for the pleasure of his Majesty.' The Grands-Louvetiers, huntsmen of the wolf-hounds, were Charles de Bailleul, Nicolas his son, Gaspard de Saint-Hérem, and the Marquis d'Heudicourt. A dignitary of the Church, the Abbé de Sainte Croix, had the staghounds. A very fine company! The king himself kept them going briskly, always had a vigilant eye to his kennels, and understood as well as anyone the weeding out of sickly or useless dogs. If any pack suffered badly from disease, some favourite of the king was ready with a present

of a sounder strain, 'which was always very graciously accepted.'

Control of the royal woods and warrens placed at the king's disposal another set of coveted appointments. The Marquis of Saint-Simon was 'captain' of Senlis and the forest of Halatte; M. de Bellefonds of Vincennes; Saint-Hérem of Fontainebleau; Lieutenant-General de Mornay of Saint-Germain, and so forth. These offices, though never highly salaried, were not exactly sinecures, for the noble captains must look to it that the preserves entrusted to their keeping were well maintained in game of every sort. But, whatever the post in connection with the royal hunt, there were rich or titled candidates in plenty when a new appointment was to be made. A chief falconer dies, and 'a certain gentleman of distinguished birth' offers two hundred thousand crowns for the office. The staff of the aviary enjoyed one or two special privileges. Thus, every year, when the king assisted at the killing of the first black kite—a rare bird enough—the 'capitaine du vol,' presumably the gentleman who flew the falcon, received from his majesty a present of the horse he was riding, along with his 'robe de chambre.'

All his life Louis was devising small distinctions, the bestowal or withdrawal of which kept his

immediate entourage in a tremor of expectancy. Everyone attached to the Court, for example, had leave to hunt the stag in the forest of Fontainebleau; elsewhere this quarry could be hunted only by the sovereign's particular permission. Again, the favour of donning the uniform of the royal hunt—the blue doublet lined with red, and plentifully bespattered with gold and silver lace—was very sparingly accorded; at Marly it was restricted to a duke, two or three marquises, and a count. A mere invitation to join the king's shooting party on a Sunday or a *jour de fête* was counted a signal honour, and Jullien says that even the 'high dignitaries of the Court' were very rarely bidden.

The king himself hunted and shot almost to the last. Finished horseman as he was, he came to grief occasionally, and a fall in Fontainebleau in 1683 cost him a broken arm; but his nerve seems never to have been impaired. Under the weight of years, and in failing health, he followed the hounds in a carriage, as his favourite chief-huntsman had done, driving four small horses at full speed through the woods, says Saint-Simon, 'avec une adresse et une justesse que n'avoient pas les meilleurs cochers.' On occasion, 'les princesses et certaines dames privilégiées' drove with the monarch in this manner;

and at Versailles, Marly, Fontainebleau, and Saint-Germain there was at this date such a reticulation of roads and decent by-ways that Louis and his ladies and his gallopers were generally in at the death. Even in the enfeebled days of the four-in-hand, he would now and then call for his horse, and insist upon heading the hunt in the saddle. One day, quite an old man, but with the hunter's blood still tingling in him, he faced alone a boar that he had wounded, and killed it, after the boar, with four strokes of his tusks, had slain the horse the king was riding.

The legislation of Louis XIV. in matters of the chase was characteristic of the man and of his times. Opinions were advancing, and in his public acts Louis was usually well abreast of opinion. It was growing late in the day to put one's subjects to death for persistent poaching, and Louis took a step in advance of Henri IV. by sparing the gallows to all offenders under the game laws. From his reign, no one was ever hanged or tortured in France for the crime of killing food. For the rest, his edicts of the chase were harsh enough, and on all of them the stamp of his absolutism is plain to see. Commoners were forbidden to carry firearms. Poachers were to be whipped for the first offence,

whipped and banished five years for the second. 'Seigneurs, gentilshommes, et nobles' were prohibited from hunting within a league of the king's own territory. 'Merchants, artisans, bourgeois, and the inhabitants of cities, towns, parishes, villages, and hamlets, together with all peasants and people of mean estate, not possessing fiefs, manors, or the right of exercising justice' were excluded from all participation in the chase, on pain of a fine of a hundred livres for a first conviction, twice that amount for a second, and three hours in the pillory on market-day, supplemented by three years' banishment, for a third. Dwellers on the banks of rivers skirting the royal domains (let their quality be what it might) were strictly prohibited from any interference with 'les officiers de nos chasses;' a fine of three thousand livres was inflicted in the first instance, and if the king's gamekeepers complained a second time the offending landowner was deprived of all hunting rights. Within the circumference of the vast warren of the Louvre, spreading six miles around Paris, no grass or any green food might be cut while the king's partridges were hatching. Vine-props were not to be left standing in the vineyards, lest they should hamper the royal chase.

These are samples of the hunting-laws of the

Grand Roi, and wherever the jurisdiction was entrusted to his own officers they were enforced severely. Magistrates, on the other hand, were often bold enough to act with leniency, refusing the sanction of the bench, as Jullien observes, to 'rigours worthy of another epoch.'

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

WRITING AND WRITING MATERIALS.

I.

THERE is at least one chamber of the mediæval monastery into which a modern student of letters glances with sympathy and a lively interest. It is the *Scriptorium*, or writing-room, where those of the brethren who were apt at the pen and brush toiled over the manuscripts which our own age has cherished as gems of penmanship and colour. Alike from history and from chronicle it is learned that the *Scriptorium* was regarded as a sacred place. It seems, as a rule, to have been hidden away in the very bosom of the monastic pile; there was often if not always some pious inscription over the door, and the right of entry belonged only to the abbé, the prior, the sub-prior, and the librarian.

If the place itself were invested with a certain sanctity, a still higher degree of sanctity attached to

the labours of the copyists. An example is furnished by the puissant confraternity of the Chartreux, or Carthusians. Most of the religious orders kept some kind of school or seminary within their walls; schools which were incessantly at war with all the scholastic and collegiate bodies covered by the ægis of the University of Paris. The Carthusians, keeping no school, devoted themselves with special and exemplary zeal to the production of what were called 'good' or 'pious' works in manuscript,—copies of portions of the Bible, or lives of the saints. The task of transcribing these was a devout exercise, and the prayer which was offered when the monks took up their pens asked the blessing of heaven on the writers and on the works which they were to copy. The most minute and scrupulous exactitude was demanded of every scribe whose skill in transcription admitted him to the *Scriptorium*, for it was a tradition in every monastery that to omit a letter, or carelessly to substitute a wrong letter for a right one, was to commit an offence against the faith; and that, *per contra*, every letter rightly copied was a sin compounded for at the judgment. The legend of the peccant monk who escaped damnation by the weight of one letter of the alphabet seems to have been current in all mediæval cloisters. It is one of the choice old

foolish tales, racy of its era, of which no one knows the origin. Rabelais himself has missed it, yet it was quite clearly an article of belief in the monasteries. A devil laid a charge against a monk (neither devil nor monk is named in the annals) who was admittedly a sinner 'in respect of numberless rules of his monastery.' But the monk had learned to write, he had copied in a fine gothic hand some three-fourths of the Bible, and the angels took a brief for him against the devil unnamed. It was agreed that every separate letter of every holy word that the monk had copied should redeem a sin,—and he came out with one letter to the good. A similar legend was that of the demon *Titivilitarius*, or *Titivillus*, who used to carry away to hell every morning a sack filled with the letters which the monks had slipped, whether from their manuscripts or from their prayers. One may conjecture that these formidable stories had no more formidable origin than the desire of the abbé that his monks should copy their tasks correctly,—for the sale of exact and handsome manuscripts (in an age when anything that could be called a 'book' ranked high among the treasures of the wealthy) was a part of the revenue of all the great monasteries.

But the monks wrought under a happy star. Beyond these cloistered seats, the conditions were

less delectable. There is a humorous and there is a pathetic aspect of the ardent struggle of the mediæval clerk to attain perfection in the art of writing. He lacked almost everything that was necessary to him; the simplest and most indispensable tools of the craft were scarce and costly; and scarcer almost, and infinitely more costly, were the models which he sought to copy. As for tools, we are still in the era of the tablet and the stylus; and where, outside the jealous seclusion of the *Scriptorium*, should a poor student procure manuscripts to work from? Nay, so great and sore was the dearth of written works of every description, that the very priests, in many instances, had not proper books for the offices of the church. In not a few of the beautiful churches of gothic Paris, the breviary common to all the clergy of the staff was enclosed in a kind of cage, which was open only during the hours of service, and prayers were promised for rich parishioners who should give or bequeath some precious manuscript. Imagine then the difficulties of the needy student who had not a place in some favoured and beneficent abbey. He must con and re-write, until he knew by heart, the copy-book which his writing-master had dictated to him; and the pedagogue of those days seems not often to have been better equipped for his business than the

hedge-schoolmaster of whom Carleton has left us a terrible picture. He flogged into his starveling pupils indifferent Latin, and a stenography which M. Franklin in his 'Ecoles et Collèges,' describes as 'une sténographie toute de fantaisie.' M. Franklin cites from the 'Logique' of Okan a specimen of the abbreviated style reduced to absurdity: 'Sic hic e fal sm qd ad simplr a e pducibile a deo g a e et silr hic a n e g a n e pducibile a do.,'—no attempt whatever at punctuation. Expanded into the schoolman's Latin, the enigma reads thus: 'Sicut hic est fallacia secundem quid ad simpliciter. A est producibile a Deo, ergo A est. Et similiter hic, A non est, ergo A non est producibile a Deo.'

We are still, I have said, with the tablet and the stylus. Tablets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries may be seen in the Bibliothèque Nationale, with the inscriptions traced over wax or plaster. Towards the end of the thirteenth century the manufacture of these tablets was so considerable as to give employment to a distinct corporation in Paris, and among the substances in common use for the purpose were ivory, ebony, horn, cedar, beech, and box. Parchment and vellum were, however, in much more general demand than tablets of wood or ivory, and in old Paris the parchment-makers were a society of some importance. It is odd to find that

the trade was very frequently associated with that of publican or tavern-keeper, but there was a reason, and a shrewd one. The students of the University, for all their lust of knowledge (a knowledge bought by most of them at a bitter price), and devotion to their Pays Latin, were eminent disturbers of the peace, and good samplers of what Rabelais calls the holy-water of the cellar. The best town-and-gown row witnessed unwillingly by Mr. Verdant Green was a frolic of Sunday-scholars in comparison with the scene when the students of Paris turned out to storm an abbey, or to settle accounts with a provost whose archers had laid hands on an obstreperous bursar; and the pauper student who had to sing his suit for daily bread through the dirty streets of the mediæval capital:—'Pain por Dieu aus escoliers,' or who earned a few sous by casting holy water on the corpses in the Hôtel Dieu, could somehow find the wherewithal to 'drink neat' in his particular tavern after dark. Hence the rector of the University, who was at once the patron and the governor of the parchment-makers, was not unwilling that they should be publicans to boot; for their houses, being necessarily within the confines of the Pays Latin (a district which embraced one-third of all Paris) were almost directly under his control.

The condition of the manuscripts which have come down to us leaves no doubt that the parchment or vellum was prepared with the nicest art. Bishops were not above giving the *parcheminiers* a hint from the pulpit, and in a sermon of Hildebert's there are instructions as to the best means of scouring and polishing the surface to be written on. If gold or silver were to be used, the parchment was stained a deep purple. The use of silver ink was persisted in longer than it should have been, for it changed colour or faded even in the lifetime of the writers; but one would like to re-discover the secret of that magic gold, the characters of which are still as brilliant as on the day that they were traced. Curious artists among the *parcheminiers* experimented on this substance and on that, and there is mention that the human skin was of little worth to the craft. A fine Bible, 'aussi remarquable,' says M. Franklin, 'par l'élégance des caractères que par la blancheur et la finesse du vélin,' was thought by the Abbé Rive to have been written on the skin of a woman. It was written in reality on the skin of a still-born Irish lamb; and a French commentator of the period makes this note upon the fact: 'The skin of a man is nothing to the skin of a sheep. Sheep-skin is good for writing on both sides, but the skin of a

dead man is just about as profitable as his bones; better bury him, skin and bones together.'

Ink, as distinguished from the mixture of smoke-black, gum, and water, makes its first appearance in Paris at some period in the twelfth century. The introduction of paper dates from the same era, but paper was rare and dear long after this. There were not many sheets of paper in the little folding-desk which the schoolboy tucked under his arm as he shivered through the streets at sunrise to his place in the straw of the school-room.

The sundry persons or corporations concerned in the mechanical production of books were clients or dependents of the University. The position had its drawbacks, but it did not lack advantages. If the authority exercised by the University struck to some extent at the independence of the workers, it also contributed not a little to their protection. For example, the delegates chosen from among the several 'communantés ouvrières' were actual members of the University, and shared in the very substantial legal privileges (dating from the reign of Philippe Auguste, 1180-1223) which were enjoyed by every accredited teacher and his pupils. As clients of the University, the trades associated with letters marched in the ranks of that stalwart institu-

tion on the days of the 'solemn processions,'—the booksellers leading the way, followed in order by the paper-makers, the parchment-makers, the *écrivains*, the binders, and the illuminators. Like the mediæval Church, which sold its favours unreservedly in the full light of day, the University exacted the price of its protection. Not a bundle of parchment could be placed on the market until the rector had received his toll; and the sales were restricted, M. Franklin says, to three places: the fair of Saint-Laurent, the more celebrated fair of Lendit, and the convent or monastery of the Mathurins. Payment of the rector's dues did not leave the parchment-makers in the position of free-traders: the King, the Bishop of Paris, the masters of the University, and the students had the right to purchase on terms which were not exactly those of competitive commerce. The pen-making industry seems to have been less severely taxed, and it advanced with the sales of parchment; but within a year or two of the close of the sixteenth century (1596) there were only twelve reputed shops in Paris where 'plumes à écrire' could be bought.

Ink had secrets of its own for generations. At one time, quite a little library of treatises appeared, each particular treatise disclosing a new recipe for the preparation of 'the one and only enduring ink;'

but the monkish magicians who had the secret of the ink of gold kept their peace. For the commoner inks, the scribes of the monasteries had one set of recipes, and the lay writers another; our own age has produced a better article, but the one supreme ink of the middle ages, the gold ink that never filtered through the guarded door of the *Scriptorium*, has defied all imitation.

The booksellers or stationers, who represented the secular branch of the trade, came under the surveillance of the University late in the thirteenth century, when the traffic in books had ceased to be exclusively the affair of the religious orders. The pious labours of the *Scriptorium* were concentrated chiefly upon works of a sacred nature; books relating to civil law or medicine, for instance, were interdicted to the copyists. Hence, as the demand arose, there would arise of necessity some agency for the production and distribution of works other than those which were to be obtained from the monasteries. A commerce of this sort must very soon attract the notice of the University, and it is probable that the secular book trade was in its very infancy under this control.

As far back, at all events, as 1275, when Philippe le Hardi was on the throne, there is a complete set of ordinances by which the bookseller must bind

himself, taking an oath every two years, between the hands of the rector.' He must swear 'faithfully to receive, take care of, expose for sale, and sell the works which should be entrusted to him.' He might not purchase them for himself until he had kept them a full month 'at the disposition of the masters and scholars.'

The name of the author and the price must be displayed on every volume, and the books must be exhibited fairly 'at a time and in a place convenient for selling them.' The bookseller in his turn was admitted to the rights and privileges of the University. From time to time, the laws or decrees affecting the book trade were amended or extended, and early in the fourteenth century the booksellers of Paris were bidden to lend the students, in consideration of a small deposit, such works as they might wish to copy. It seems that the prices of books were determined in general by the University; the day was long gone by, as a historian observes, when Grécie, Countess of Anjou, gave in return for the Homilies of Haimon of Halberstadt two hundred sheep, a *muid* of wheat, another of rye, and some marten skins.

The *écrivains* or copyists not associated with the Church were sufficiently numerous at the beginning of the fourteenth century to have a street named

after them, the Rue aus Escrivans, and at this date the most noted of the Paris copyists numbered among their patrons kings, princes, and rich seigneurs of many countries. Henri du Trévou; Gobert, 'le souverain escripvain;' Sicard, who worked for King Richard of England; Guillemin, in the pay of the Grand Master of Rhodes; Jean Flamel, and the famous Nicolas Flamel, were masters of the pen at this era.

Up to the close of the middle ages, the style of handwriting which had the greatest vogue (and the only style employed in the transcription of manuscripts) was the stiff but elegant gothic, the characters of which are found in some of the earliest products of the printing-press. But the cursive or running-hand was also well known, and began, towards the end of the thirteenth century, to gain upon the gothic or scholastic hand. As education, commerce, and social intercourse advanced, the occasions and necessities of writing were multiplied, and the formal and elaborate style of the leisurely *Scriptorium*, and of the well-paid scribes in the employment of the great, began to be superseded by a style which was not only far more easily acquired, but which enabled the writer to perform a much greater quantity of work. It is obvious, on the other hand, that, the greater the quantity of writing,

the greater the danger that the quality of the penmanship would deteriorate; and on this point we have M. Franklin's testimony that French handwriting of the fifteenth century was 'en pleine décadence.'

The Benedictines, learned and approved critics in this matter, declaimed against the slovenly and 'ridiculous' penmanship of the age, which was giving to the world 'a mass of manuscripts hideous to behold.' But, in sum, what did all this really mean? It meant that the pen, driven by the human hand, was no longer equal to the multiplicity of the tasks that were demanded of it. The age of writing, as the sole or chief means of literary intercourse, had exhausted itself: the era of the printing-press was come.

II.

OF the beginnings of printing in France; of the coming of Fust and Schoiffer from Mayence to set up a press in Paris; of their reception at the Sorbonne (the college at which Schoiffer had been birched into the elements of Latin), where a room was assigned them for their work; of the birth in this room (in 1470) of the earliest specimen of

French typography, an edition of the Epistles of the grammarian, Gasparino Barzizio, it would be quite too long to tell. A volume of Sallust followed in 1471, and in two years the rude little press in a chamber of the Sorbonne had turned out no fewer than thirty works, representing '1146 feuillets in-folio et 1026 feuillets in-quarto.'

But, to keep within the lists, the question is, what did printing do for or against the interests of the writers with the pen? At the outset, it touched them closely, and to their hurt. There had been established, in the first years of the printing-press, a corporation of 'master-writers' (their origin dates from the execution, for forgery, of a secretary of Charles IX.), who made very good rules to exclude the competitors of whom they were afraid, and who offered small inducements to the writers who might have served them. Here and there, an independent Geoffrey Tory laboured to restore the fallen fortunes of the old order of *écrivains*, to reform the spelling which had passed into a jest, and to put in a stop at the end of a sentence; but neither a Geoffrey Tory nor a corporation of master-writers could stay the demoralization of the old class of copyists, whose occupations, whose privileges and profits, and whose very existence were imperilled by the new machinery of printing. It is, however, to be noted that at

this very crisis, when the art of writing with the pen was coming to be reckoned with the lost arts, penmanship in France began in reality to take on that personal character which it could never have acquired under the severe sway of the gothic. The gothic style, archaic at this time, and mastered only by patient endeavour, was as impersonal as a printer's slip. The Church, which had created that style, strove hard to maintain the traditions of the art, but ruin had come upon it. It survived for a period within certain cultured cloisters, and was still affected by the connoisseur; but, ceasing to be esteemed by the many, it soon ceased to be practised.

In the manuscript department of the Bibliothèque Nationale specimens are preserved of the handwriting of many of the sovereigns and princes of France, mediæval and of days nearer our own. Even in the middle ages, the education of a French prince who stood near the throne was in general very scrupulously attended to, and long after the dawn of the modern era royalty in its infancy and its teens was whipped as often and as thoroughly as any merchant's son at college. In the royal schoolroom the art of the pen was not neglected, and here and there it found an apt exponent. Jean II. (le Bon)

and his son Charles V. (le Sage) were both good penmen in the gothic style; of the latter it is on record that not a man of his time in France wrote a better hand. Brantôme found so much to admire in the signature of Louis XI. that he reproduced it in a manuscript of his own. Good-hearted and considerate Louis XII., for all his interest in the fine arts, could never master the art of writing, and his hand was as illegible as that of his second wife, Anne of Brittany. Of the gorgeous François I., Pierre Mathieu has said that he could barely wield a pen, and Voltaire declared that he could not spell; but the truth is that he wrote rather elegantly, and was seldom at variance with his spelling-book. Henri II., a lover of letters, wrote as good a hand as his sister, Marguerite of Savoy. The writing of François II. is described by M. Franklin as 'un peu enfantine,' while that of his Queen, Marie Stuart, was 'fort bonne,' and, in the opinion of experts, a hand which betrayed a heart fuller of ambition than of tenderness. The calligraphy of Charles IX. was singularly fine, neat, close, and upright. Remembering the massacre of St. Bartholomew, one wonders whether it were before or after that event that some graphologist unnamed discovered in the penmanship of this king the expression of 'a great

hardness of heart.' Henri III. (of whom, in most particulars, the less said the better) had some gift in speaking but very little in writing, and to him Voltaire might have applied with incontestable truth his sarcasm on the spelling of Francis I. It would be tedious to drain the list, but it is well to remark that many of these sovereigns, both of mediæval France and of the France of the Renaissance, were greatly the superiors in intellectual attainments of the majority of their courtiers and their arrogant seigneurs. Of the spelling in a letter of a Duc de Guise, preserved in a volume of the Condé 'Memoirs,' Dulaure observes that it would put to the blush a kitchen-maid of these days. Charles de Cossé, Count of Brissac, and a Marshal of France, 'could barely,' says the same authority, 'scrawl on paper the letters of his name.' Anne de Montmorency, by birth, wealth, and position one of the first men of his age, and Constable of France under François I., could neither write nor read. Indeed, while the king was often a scholar, well abreast of the learning of his age, it was as yet the boast of his nobles that they knew less than the peasants on their lands.

The seventeenth century saw the corporation of master-writers on their feet again. Their original charter was confirmed in 1615, and in 1630 their rules

for the examination of candidates were stiff enough to necessitate a course of cramming. The examination extended over three days. On the first day, the twenty-four elders of the corporation considered the specimens of writing which the candidates had submitted to them. On the second day, about a fortnight later, they interrogated each candidate in turn on the principles and modes of hand-writing, and on the art of instruction in hand-writing. There was an interval of eight days between the second and the third séance, when the candidate was required to prove his skill as an expert in the detection of false signatures,—for it was to the judgment of a master-writer that contested signatures were submitted in courts of law.

The examination passed, the licentiate was conducted to the Châtelet, where, in the presence of the procureur général, or his deputy, his name was inscribed on the register of the corporation, and he took an oath never to divulge the 'arts and mysteries' of the craft. The statutes of the corporation of writers—a society aspiring to rank not beneath the painters and sculptors—were renewed by Louis XIV., in whose reign they are viewed 'en pleine prospérité.' But the old abuses of abbreviation in spelling, and the fantastic and futile ornaments of the writing-master were still complained of; and scholars

and students were seeking a fixed and finite standard. The Parliament of the day—to which, in its leisure moments, nothing came amiss—took the matter up with a zest, and commissioned two famous writers, Barbedor and Lebé, to furnish models of what was best in hand-writing, for legal and all other uses. The two experts fulfilled their task so well that a decree of Parliament, dated 1633, enjoined that the 'alphabets, characters, letters, and form of writing set out in these examples' should be used exclusively in France, 'in the name of the community or corporation of master-writers.' What practical success this enactment had no chronicler has informed us, but the manuscripts of the period, which may be consulted in the Bibliothèque Nationale, seem to prove that the full round hand of our own day, as distinguished from the artificial but very beautiful style of the *Scriptorium*, dates in France from the reign of Louis XIV.

The Grand Monarque, who had had for his writing-master the Lebé of calligraphic note, possessed in Toussaint-Rose a secretary and amanuensis of signal ability. In the market for autographs, kings' signatures rule high, but the learned collector is said to be shy in the presence of a reputed 'Louis XIV.,' for the reason that Toussaint-Rose wrote his master's name a trifle better than the king himself.

He had acted as secretary to that distinguished prison-breaker Cardinal de Retz, and to Cardinal Mazarin; he was not only a fine penman but a consummate letter-writer; and Saint-Simon has hinted that the choicest epistles of Louis XIV. owe the dignity of their style to the literary skill of their true author, Toussaint-Rose. But Louis himself wrote admirably, and experts in graphology are still undecided whether he were as selfish as his life proclaims him, or as fine-hearted as he shows in his handwriting. To settle the point it would be necessary to call the ghost of Toussaint-Rose.

Louis XIV. contented himself with writing well; Louis XV. learned printing at the same time, had a little composing-room of his own, and used to put into type some of his Latin exercises.

According to M. Franklin, Richelieu, Fénélon, Buffon the naturalist, and Beaumarchais of 'Figaro,' wrote excellently. Good hand-writing, but not of the first quality, was that of Scarron, Diderot, Voltaire, Bossuet, Racine, Boileau, and Crébillon. Mediocre as to their penmanship were Descartes, Mazarin, La Fontaine, Corneille, Molière, La Bruyère, La Rochefoucauld, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau; and the same critic characterises as bad the hand-writing of Madame de Maintenon, Cardinal de Retz, Montesquieu, Vauvemarques, and Marivaux.

In respect of writing materials in the seventeenth century, the ink-horn was in universal use, and scholars and men of law carried it at their girdles; goose-quills, swan-quills, and crow-quills were much commoner than metal pens, and the steel pen was little known until the following century. The dealers in pencils were established on the Pont-Neuf. Indiarubber, as an embellishment of the writing-table, seems to have been introduced only towards the close of the eighteenth century. Writing-paper was of a stout and heavy quality, ladies liked it perfumed, and fashions in note-paper were continually changing. Racine writes to his younger daughter three letters on three different kinds of paper, to let her know how quickly the modes succeed each other.

'The new mourning-paper is already out of fashion, as it is now quite a month old. The other two specimens are so much the rage that it is no longer possible to buy them; the ladies have emptied the stationers' shops. Adieu, my dear child. My letters are not very long; they are only to show you the kinds of paper we are at present using.'

At first, letters were merely folded, tied with silk, and sealed; and the earliest form of envelope was simply a sheet of white paper in which the missive was enclosed. Love-letters in the sixteenth century

were called *chapons*, in the seventeenth they became *poulets*, a term not yet out of vogue. Why should a love-letter be called a fowl? Because, says Le Duchat, it was at one time folded much as a fowl is trussed.

THE BAGNE.

I.

THE SUCCESSORS OF THE GALLEY-SLAVE.

As evening began on the highway, the quiet French highway, your traveller riding to his friendly inn might have drawn rein in some uneasiness, catching the first notes of a strange and dread-inspiring chant. He pulled up, perhaps, under the shelter of an oak, not certain whether to advance or to put his horse's head about.

That terrible dirge-like chant grew more distinct, and now in the intervals arose another sound, not more grateful to the ear, the clank of steel fetters.

Oh! oh! Jean Pierre, oh!
Fais toilette.
V'la, v'la le barbier, oh!
Oh, oh, oh, Jean Pierre, oh!
V'la la charette.

The air was unutterably mournful, the words were horrid in their realism. What voices were these urging Jean Pierre to his last toilette, showing him the barber-surgeon come to clip the hair from the back of the neck, and the cart of the guillotine standing for him at the prison door?

By the jangling of their chains the singers were proclaimed before they came in sight. These were the *forçats*, or convicts, of France marching to the prison called the *bagne*, and singing as they went the 'Chanson de la Veuve'—Song of the Widow—the guillotine, the widow-maker.

They came on at a slow and painful tramp, hundreds of them, men and youths, each wearing an iron collar and supporting a part of the chain which attached him by the neck to the prisoner in front. Their clothes were dull with dust; dust and sweat had made a glaze upon their faces. Some of the younger ones wore a look of terror, the effect of the dreadful 'Song of the Widow,' added to the wretchedness of their situation. Others, old *forçats*, were reminded of a guillotining in the *bagne*, when they had knelt upon the ground in a long double row, bareheaded, to see a comrade pass between them to the scaffold, at the foot of which stood the black coffin-cart, with the skull and cross-bones painted above the door.

The armed guard marching on either side of the vast chain of the condemned had heard that chant of the 'widow-maker' many times, but none ever listened unmoved to those fearsome words, that air of incommunicable sadness.

Some of the prisoners had tears streaming down their faces, faces on which crime or evil fortune had written such 'strange defeatures.' In others that hymn of the scaffold seemed to kindle afresh the passions which had riveted on their necks the steel collar of the *forçat*. Here and there in haggard eyes which were never uplifted burned the slow fires of remorse.

Ah! Ah! Ah!
Faucher colas.

The chant ends with the falling of the blade.

On and on at a heavy pace went the long cohort of the chain, and each man knew that every step he took brought him nearer to the place where his miseries would not finish but begin. At the end of the march was the *bagne*. For the new-made *forçat* the name was an epitome of all the terrors the imagination could conceive.

Would not the traveller whose progress this piteous pageant had arrested spur forward to the shelter of his inn, and call quickly for a flagon of warm red wine?

II.

BUT leave the gentleman to dispel the picture with his wine, and follow the chain in its miserable procession through France, the France of the early days of our own century of grace.

When night fell, with its chances of slipping from the gang into cover of ditch or thicket, a halt was called. There were fixed *étapes* or stages for each day, and sheds and barns were requisitioned for the night's lodging. If the regular ration of meat were not forthcoming, it was a struggle to have the hand first in the common mess-tub of beans and cabbage. The warder's whistle blew the signal for rest, and, fettered and galled, you threw yourself into the straw.

At daybreak the whistle blew again. There was no dressing to be done, for no one had changed his clothes, and no washing, there was no water to wash with; but the smell of the air, how sweet it was when the doors of the straw-shed were unbarred! The march was taken up once more.

Here came a little town, just turning out for the business of the day—shop, warehouse, or meadow beyond. The rattle of the fetters is heard. 'V'la les forçats!' The 'lags' are coming! The town rushes out pell-mell, feasts itself with that gruesome

sight, howls imprecations, which the chain is not slow to give back.

Sometimes it was different. The towns-folk or the peasants were ready with gifts of fresh fruit, vegetables, bread, wine, cider; and the chain knew how to thank them for these sympathies. In general, however, when a town or village was passed on the stage, it was a battle of oaths and obscenities between the free people and the *forçats*.

At intervals along the march, the whole gang were turned into a field, stripped to the skin, and searched. Weather made no difference in the orders of the day; it was trudge, trudge, trudge, in sun or rain; and sometimes a day's pilgrimage gave taste of three or four different climates. One might be burned red by midday, and lie down in the straw at night soaked to the skin. The doctor's functions on the march were not nominal.

It went on drearily, one day and another; ever so many days. The chain twitching at the collar—old *forçats*, fettered together, had the knack of easing the pain—grazed and worried the neck ceaselessly. There was no help, unless one fell by the way. It is not easy to conjure up in fancy the sufferings of the home-bred *forçat*, or the decent victim of conspiracy, or the prosperous lottery-swindler or bank-

breaker, or the government contractor, or the easy and half-unconscious partner in some social crime, suddenly smitten by the law, severed from home and family, and thrust into that hideous company of the chain. There were some who went mad on the route between Paris and the *bagne*.

At certain stages, lengths were added to the chain. The provincial courts sent out their drafts to meet the main contingent from Paris. As the chain increased in length it increased in criminal and psychological interest; and towards the end of the closing stage it linked together examples of every offence that the law had cognisance of. Thieves, robbers, and house-breakers made the largest category. Murderers, in a greatly less numerous class, figured second on the list; and it dwindled down from the poisoners (the art of poison flourished rather poorly at that epoch) parricides, the perjurers, the bigamists, and the curiously small tail of political offenders. I have omitted the forgers, coiners, incendiaries, blackmailers, and defaulters in public offices; but it will be seen that the catalogue embraced male society at large. The 'flying chain' of the *forçats* on the march tethered one and all.

At the walls of Brest, Toulon, or Rochefort, the march ended.

III.

WHAT *was* the *bagne*?*

It represented the penal system which had superseded the punishment of the galleys. The *galérien*, or galley slave, ceasing to be employed at the oar, or but very rarely employed there, became the *forçat*, which term is the equivalent of our convict. There were three great *bagnes* in France. That of Toulon was built in 1748; in the following year the *bagne* at Brest was erected by convict labour; and, sixteen years later, the *bagne* of Rochefort was constructed. These prisons were under the control of the Ministry of Marine (which to this day has the control of transportation), and towards the middle of the present century they held a population of nearly eight thousand.

Footsore and sick and stained with many weathers the company of felons at length passed through the gates of the *bagne*. The free world was fairly behind them now. They saw and *felt* defiant walls around them; great doors were unbarred for them;

* The name seems to be of rather doubtful origin:—Ital. *bagno*, Fr. *bain*, bath; *i.e.*, the bath of the Seraglio at Constantinople was in the first instance a prison of this nature. Or, as others have it, the prison adjoined the bath. The French *bagnes* were sometimes known as *prisons mouillées*, floating prisons, because the prisoners had once been lodged in hulks.

iron gratings smote them with a sense of hopelessness.

They saw the strong bodies of guards and warders—some with sabre and rifle, others with rods—who were to be their taskmasters in this grey abode.

They saw swarms of felons coming and going in the grotesque and flaming livery of the *bagne*.

This was the manner of their reception on arrival. They were first passed in review by the governor and chief officers of the prison, by the principal surgeon, and by the head of the police, who assured himself of each man's identity. They were then sent for a sorely needed bath, and the clothes which they put off for their ablutions were exchanged for the costume of the *bagne*. This was a loose red jacket, a sleeveless waistcoat of the same colour or of yellow, trousers of dark yellow or drab, buttoning down the leg, a shirt of coarse calico, and a woollen cap in shape like the Republican cap of liberty. The colour of the cap indicated to some extent the status of the wearer. The *bonnet rouge*, or red cap, told that he was condemned *à temps*, that is to say for a period of years, few or many. The dreaded *bonnet vert*, the green cap, was the badge of servitude *à perpetuité*—for life! Jacket and trousers were stamped with the T. F. (*travaux forcés*, hard labour).

Now, then, the habit of the new-comer is complete.

Not so; he has yet to receive his irons. The collar which he wore on the march has been put off, but an anklet of steel must replace it. He is taken to a courtyard where a convict smith, with anvil, hammer, and an assortment of fetters, awaits him. He lies face down-wards, and a convict assistant bends his leg and raises his foot to the anvil. The ring is bolted on the ankle, and to this is riveted a chain, one end of which is attached to a leathern waistbelt.

Now, it would be no mean portion of one's punishment to sustain, night and day for years, the degrading burden of the fetters, but the degradation yet lacked something.

The *forçat* must not alone be chained; he must, in addition, be chained to another *forçat*. In certain circumstances this must have been the worst and most torturing penalty of all. For the new-comer could make no choice of a companion for his chain. The choice was made hap-hazard, and in general without the least consideration, by the officer who presided over the ironing. 'Your name's Legrand, is it? Next man in the line whose name begins with L,' and so on. As a result, the most bizarre and repulsive couplings. There were, it is true, many affectionate companionships of the chain; but there were many more which inflicted an eternity of suffering upon one of the pair. Even in slavery, where there

are two in perpetual association, one will be master; and thus it was with the bond-slaves of the *bagne*.

It was by no means impossible for a man of breeding and refinement, choice and gentle in word and manner, to drag his chain at the heel of a truculent assassin, a brutal robber, or a gigantic negro who was continually coming under the lash for insubordination. That was an anxious moment when the *accouplement* was made, and the two partners of the chain first scanned one another.

Three days of repose were allowed to the new arrivals—'repose,' fettered to the wooden guard-bed of the *bagne*, in a huge chamber shared by some five or six hundred condemned ones, and patrolled day and night by warders.

IV

At five on the morning of the fourth day, if it were summer, at six in winter, the *Diane* sounded the turn-out, and the new hand fell in with his gang. The life of the *bagne* had begun for him.

Suspicion is the note of prison rule, and in prisons like the *bagnes*, where most minds brooded on escape, suspicion was a virtue. What *forçat* had been tampering with his chain or ankle-ring in the night? This was the first question in the governor's mind in

the morning, and there was a warder whose special duty it was to furnish a practical answer by demonstration.

As he descended into the courtyard from the great sleeping chamber, each convict presented his fettered ankle to this functionary, who tapped the ring and chain with a hammer. His trained ear told him in an instant, by the sound which the metal gave out, whether file or saw had been at work on it since the previous morning.

The labour of the day for the *forçat* depended on the class which had been assigned him. If of average physical capacity, he was likely to be put first to the *grande fatigue*, answering to the hard labour of the convict employed on public works at Portland or Dartmoor; but very often a task of much greater severity. He might be sawing timber, hauling great blocks of stone, piling shot, excavating, cleansing docks, building, quarrying. The varied works of dock, harbour, and arsenal—along with other employment more drily penal—engaged the prisoner of the *bagne* to whom the *grande fatigue* was allotted. Sudden changes of temperature increased the pains of the task. Thus, during the ten hours of daily labour (the English convict works only seven), the *forçat* might be exposed in turns to the action of a burning sun, to humid airs, to glacial rains, to biting

winds and penetrating fogs. The locality of the *bagne* made all the difference in this respect.

The raw beginner had his apprenticeship to go through, and it was more bitter, or not quite so bitter, according to the character of his chain companion. He had to learn to walk and work in a steel tether just nine feet long, four and a half feet of which belonged to another man. He had to swing his pick without danger to his comrade, and to avoid the danger of the other pick—and he might be quite unused to physical labour of any kind. If the brother of the chain (supposing him an old hand) did not choose to help the 'prentice, it was liable to be awkward for both, but it was almost certain to be awkward for the 'prentice. In the hauling of weights of stone up a steep incline, so many *forçats* harnessed like beasts to the cart, no individual could shirk his share of the pulling without being observed by the others; and if he made a slip he brought a risk upon the whole trace.

In this event, on the return journey, the weakling or the shifty member of the party seldom escaped the vengeance, individual or collective, which the *bagne* so well knew how to wreak, unnoticed by the warder in charge.

In the stacking of timber, a pile, awkwardly built, was in danger of toppling. The warning was

given, two partners of a common chain pulled opposite ways, and one—it was always, of course, the feebler of the pair for whom the grave had to be dug. These accidents might be accidental, but rather often they were not. Yet there were instances of quite another sort. It was not uncommon for the habitual criminal, linked with a delicate first offender, to take him under his wing, shield him from the gibes of the gang, and do all his work for him during the first weeks of his sojourn in the *bagne*.

There were critics of the *bagnes* in the Chamber and on the press, who maintained that the *grande fatigue* was a farce, and that no work was done. But access to these prisons—or, at least, to the actual scenes of labour—was even more difficult than it is to an English prison to-day, which, I need scarcely say, is not open to the first caller. Few persons capable of recording their impressions had ever seen the interior of a French *bagne*. It would have been a juster criticism that the *grande fatigue* was of comparatively little worth to anybody. It was seldom so directed as to train the *forçat* to a habit of industry—the aim of the modern penal system in most European countries, and certainly in ours—but, when rigidly applied, and this depended a good deal upon a very callous system of overseer-

ship, it took the physical utmost out of the convict. He slept awhile in the sun at noon, or walked if the chance of the cards went against him. It was not unusual, when one partner of the chain wanted to sleep and the other to stroll, to settle the difference over a game of cards—a forbidden luxury which a 'soft' warder winked at. One partner played the other for his half of the chain.

At the night whistle the several gangs were marched back to the *bagne*. Each man got what he could out of the *gamelle*, or mess-tub, and took his place on the plank bed, a long bench running from end to end of the dormitory. No pillow eased his head, no mattress his limbs; his chain was locked to a ring at the foot of the bed; and hot, wet, or cold, he never put off his clothes. The aspect of the *bagne* at night, under the flicker of the lamp, was that of an extended Morgue.

V.

THE *bagne* had its own penal code. It was death by the guillotine to strike an officer, to kill a comrade, or to incite the *chiourme* (the general body of convicts) to revolt. Not seldom death on the scaffold was a form of suicide peculiar to the prisoner of the *bagne*. 'I'm sick of life!'—'je m'ennuie de vivre!'

—and the weary wretch took another's life to end his own. Sometimes it was an agreement between two companions of the chain; one slew the other, and gave himself up to be guillotined.

The escaped convict *à temps*, brought back to the *bagne*, received an addition of three years to his original sentence. If a life-sentence man, he was punished with three years of the 'double-chain.' Sentence of the double-chain meant confinement night and day, attached to a wooden form, in a large hall in which some hundreds of other unfortunates were undergoing the same cruel penalty; guarded incessantly, and freed only at rare intervals for a scant period of exercise in the open air.

But by far the commonest punishment was flogging, or the *bastonnade*. The *correcteur*, or flogger, was invariably a convict who owed his office to the strength of his biceps and the pleasure he derived from wielding the whip. He laid on to the naked back and shoulders of his victim from ten to a hundred strokes with a one-tailed 'cat' of plaited cord, very thick in the middle, and stiffened in coal-tar. The hatred in which the convict executioners were held by the rest of the *chiourme* is easily imagined. The gusto they had for their work, arising in a deep-seated sanguinary instinct, was stimulated by the small gratuities paid them by the

administration, and by extra rations. It was necessary to lodge them together in a separate part of the prison, for their lives were always in danger, and most of them carried the cicatrices of wounds inflicted by those of their comrades who had received the *bastonnade.* One of these ferocious creatures might be seen in the evening, towards the hour at which his victims were delivered to him, watching like an animal of prey the door by which they were led in.

The convicts made one exception, and one only, in favour of the *correcteur.* It was when the office was bestowed upon one of their number who had fulfilled a similar function before being sent to the *bagne.* They considered it not improper that he should continue to exercise in misfortune the calling he had lived by when in freedom.

VI.

'LES forçats, tels coupables qu'ils soient, sont bien malheureux.'—'Let the *forçats* be as guilty as they may, they have a pretty evil time of it.' These were the words of an officer who had held one of the highest posts in the French prison service.

It was great luck to get into hospital for a while, if only to escape the eternal mess of bean-broth,

brown bread, a little olive oil or rancid butter, and biscuit which the navy had rejected. Some trifling extras in food and drink might be bought at the canteen of the *bagne*, but in quantities such as none but the convicts themselves would appreciate.

Nevertheless, there were degrees in the pains of these unfortunates. Like Dante's, the Inferno of the *bagne* had its lower and its higher circles. From toiling in the open air under an ardent or inclement sky, the convict of approved behaviour might pass in time to the covered workshops, where the *petite*, as opposed to the *grande fatigue*, offered a large amelioration of his lot. Here he joined, along with other good-conduct prisoners, the infirm and sickly of the flock who could not be employed at the rude tasks of the outdoor gangs. The first great boon accorded here was the releasing him from his companion of the chain. He was promoted to the honours of the 'half-chain,' wearing some three or four links attached to the anklet, the last of which could be fastened to the waist-belt. Then, his work brought him some slender recompense in wages, a portion of which, if he were destined to be sent again into the world, was put by against his day of liberation. The life-term man received his small wage in full.

There were other gains, and notably some freedom of choice in labour. It is not work which kills in prison, but monotony. If not excessive in quantity, the daily task of the convict, the necessity of using his muscles regularly, so many hours per day, keeps him in physical health. The man going out of an indolent world into the ordered sphere of compulsory toil in prison, 'puts on' flesh and weight if he is decently cared for. But there is the risk that the changeless routine may lower or impair his intellectual parts. The prisoner admitted to the *salles d'épreuve*, the probationers' or good-conduct rooms of the *bagne*, became to a small extent a free agent in his choice of work, and a fair latitude was allowed him to do little jobs on his own account. He had time of his own, and could use it to plait things in straw, or carve things in wood or cocoa-nut, or make little churches or models of the *bagne* in pasteboard, which were sold for him to visitors in the bazaar against the gate. If he remained a rogue in the *salle d'épreuve*, he found opportunity to coin money, or to forge passports for himself or a friend, for use in the event of an escape.

A coveted berth was that of *payole*, or scribe for the unlettered lags. This was only to be secured in the *salle d'épreuve*. It was an office which brought

perquisites to the letter-writer, and gained him of necessity many of the secrets of his clients, which, at a pinch, he might turn to his own advantage. There is not an angle from which this uniquely tragic scene of the human comedy may be viewed which does not show up some baseness attempted or practised on one another by these unhappy creatures, who, dead to the law, came to kill in themselves every sense of justice and of honour. 'Le bagne est une pepinière de monstres'—'The *bagne* is a nursery of monsters'—was said of it a few years before its abolition, in 1852, by those best able to speak of the actual results of the system.

There was an ironic humour in some of the anomalies of the administration. At one epoch, certain favoured *forçats* lived in the *bagnes* much as it pleased them. 'Gentlemen' with means were allowed to hire themselves out as grooms, valets, tutors, or dancing masters. Some were followed to the town where the *bagne* lay by their wives and families (as the well-to-do British felon was accompanied by wife or mistress to Botany Bay), and went out to spend the day with them, dressed in the fashion, and hiding under the trouser-leg the steel anklet which was the sole betrayer of their disgrace. They returned to the *bagne* at night, to a snug alcove partitioned from the common sleeping chamber, where

the *chiourme* lay fettered in sweaty clothes on a bare board.

VII.

FRANCE, in most things so receptive of ideas, has been a tardy reformer of prisons, and is backward in the matter at this day. Some three or four notable governors excepted, the administrators of the *bagnes* held to the old notion that it was more important to punish than to cure the criminal. It would be fairer to say that the new idea that the criminal *could* be cured had not yet taken root in France. To the governor of the *bagne* his 'convicts' were still the 'galley-slaves' whom he had whipped half-naked at the oar from which nothing but death or utter sickness ever released them. It was not in his bond to bring into the ways of virtue the criminals whom the law had handed over to him to use as 'mechanical motors,' or beasts of burden; or even to guide their labour in such a way as to teach them how to work for themselves when they had passed out of his keeping. In general he made it a point of honour to leave his *bagne* to his successor in the precise condition in which it had been left to him. His intercourse with his brother governors was confined to an occasional interchange of prisoners, as a

present, much as the American slave-owner made a gift of a 'useful boy' to a neighbour or a new colonist. Rarely, a prison chaplain of an intelligent and benevolent force not common in that service, devoted himself wholly to softening and elevating the lot of his '*misérables*;' and often with grand effect.

THE BAGNE.

II.

THE *FORÇAT* AS PRISON-BREAKER.

NEARLY all the great escapes of bygone days were favoured by conditions and circumstances which have absolutely ceased to be. What prisoner nowadays is left a week or more unvisited in his cell, with ample leisure to dig his tunnel underground or his passage through the wall? In the exciting account of an escape from Portland, in his novel 'Broken Bonds,' the late Major Hawley Smart shows the prisoner conveying into his cell an iron hook to be used in grappling a wall. Now hooks, files, saws, and other implements handy in an escape were often smuggled in pie-dishes into the cells of French and German prisons in the last century, and thereby hung the tale of many a notable evasion. But the

convict at Portland does not eat pie, and a grappling-iron could not well be conveyed to him in a six-ounce loaf. Major Hawley Smart describes this instrument as indispensable to the success of the attempt, but he omits to say by what means the prisoner got it into his cell; and at that point accordingly a very interesting narrative ceases to be credible.

In the modern convict prison, every prisoner is searched before he enters his cell for meals and when he leaves it for work; during every hour of the day he is under the eyes of his guards; and he cannot screen himself from observation after he is locked in for the night. Now and again, aided by some extraordinary chance, or thanks to an heroic combination of patience, skill, and daring, a prisoner does make his escape even from such a place as Portland; but the attempts are few, and the successes very few indeed; whereas prison-breaking was an art which had hundreds of successful practitioners in the days when the modern system was not thought of.

Famous amongst the feats of their kind are many of the flights accomplished from the *bagnes*, the convict prisons of France, which superseded in 1748 the old punishment of the galleys. From many points of view this is the most interesting chapter in the

varied history of prison-breaking. There were exceptional opportunities, but there were also very exceptional hindrances. The *forçat* working in dock or arsenal at Toulon, Brest, or Rochefort, with free labourers all around him, had a better chance than falls to the convict of our day, who is hardly ever associated with hired workmen. Where convicts and hired workmen are engaged on the same task, and enclosed within the same walls, the convict has always the possibility at least of effecting a disguise, and passing through the gates unchallenged. A dockyard, too, offers a hundred means of concealment which are wanting in the naked quarries of Portland or on the bogs of Dartmoor. Again, the *garde-chiourme*, or warder, of the *bagne*, tyrant and slave-driver as he was, had a palm much easier to grease than any warder's in the prison service of these days. One would not say or suppose that no warder had his price to-day; but every warder had his price then. In a word, the escape, or the attempt to escape, was a recognised and familiar feature of life in the *bagne*; it was of weekly if not of daily occurrence, and there were facilities which are not now to be reckoned on.

On the other hand, the obstacles were rather stiff. The venal warder who took the bribe of the *forçat* to assist his escape was fully capable of selling him

afterwards to the authorities, thus pocketing two prices. The reward or *prime* paid by the Government varied according to the locality in which the prisoner was taken. If he were seized within the docks or arsenal, it was twenty-five francs; if in the town in which the *bagne* was situated, fifty francs; and one hundred if the convict were apprehended at any greater distance.

Every free citizen—*garde-chiourme*, soldier, sailor, boatman, townsman, or peasant—was more or less on the alert to secure the *prime* when the cannon gave warning of an escape; so the prudent convict meditating flight bethought him first of a change of costume. The livery of the *bagne*—green woollen cap for a life sentence, red for a shorter term, a red or pink 'slop' and yellow vest, with trousers of a light drab, buttoned down the legs, and stamped with the letters T. F. for *travaux forcés*—was not exactly the attire in which to walk unobserved; and the disguise, to be effective, had to be as complete as possible.

There was another and a worse impediment. It was a terrible part of the punishment of the *bagne* that every *forçat* was chained by the leg to a brother in captivity. This awful companionship was perpetual; the condemned pairs were bound together through every hour of the day, let their task be what it might, and sustained their irons on the

wooden bench on which, without changing their clothes, they lay down to sleep at night. This made a serious difficulty in cases where one of the pair was bent upon a flight which his comrade was unwilling to share. In such an event, the adventurer ran the risk of an immediate betrayal. Experience taught the old *galérien* or *forçat* that it was safer to dispense with an accomplice, and in working out his scheme alone he needed all his diplomacy to lull the suspicions of his companion of the chain.

Then the irons were sounded every morning. As the gangs were marched out of the *bagne* to their work, each *forçat*, on entering the courtyard from the sleeping hall, presented his fettered ankle to a warder with a mallet, who tapped the steel ring and the links of the chain. Practice had given the functionary so nice an ear that the prisoner who had been stealthily notching his fetters with file or saw during the night must have quaked as he offered them to the test of the mallet in the morning.

Again, the penalties of failure in this difficult and dangerous *emprise* were quite severe enough to deter the weaker brethren. The prisoner condemned *à temps*, that is to say, for any period less than life, if taken in the act of escaping, underwent the *bastonnade*, a flogging with a whip of which the single lash was of plaited cord, thick in the middle and

tapering towards the end, steeped in vinegar and stiffened in coal-tar. From ten to a hundred blows were laid on by a convict *correcteur*, appointed to this office for the strength of his arm and the pleasure he took in flaying his victims.* If the flight were accomplished, and the prisoner were afterwards re-taken, three years were added to the term of his original sentence. In the case of one condemned *à perpetuité* or for life, an attempt at escape was followed by the *bastonnade*; while re-arrest entailed upon the convict three years of the 'double chain,' a punishment which will be described.

The instant an escape was made known, three shots from the alarm gun of the *bagne* told it to all the neighbourhood; signals were hoisted, scouts sent out, a cordon of sentries was drawn about the prison, and if the prey were not soon run to earth either by the agents of the law or by the amateur detectives who were always keen on the scent, a full personal description was posted far and near. With the *prime* of a hundred francs upon his head, once he had gained the open country, the flying convict was hunted without mercy.

* Records of the *bagne* have preserved the memory of a certain 'Jean le Bourreau,' a bandy-legged assassin of prodigious strength, whose delight in this exercise was such that he had to be seized and held after inflicting the allotted punishment, to prevent him from adding a few strokes on his own account.

Now, however, that it has been shown how many obstacles lay in the path of the would-be prison-breaker, and what lively sufferings the failure of his efforts assured to him, it remains to be said that escapes from the *bagnes* were nevertheless of extraordinary frequency. There were convicts at Toulon, Brest, and Rochefort, whose accumulations of sentence, resulting from innumerable flights, amounted to fifty years, and in some instances even to one hundred; and others who had passed so often under the relentless hands of the *correcteur* that their bodies were 'one mask' of scars.

It is easily gathered from this that in every *bagne* there was a class of almost indomitable prison-breakers. The famous Petit, who spent more than half his life in the fetters of the *forçat*, was continually ridding himself of them, and slipping out for a holiday. Re-taken at Abbeville on one occasion, he sent word to the mayor that he should leave prison the following day, as it was 'not at all a proper sort of place.' Making a jocular inquiry as to his safety the next afternoon, the astonished mayor learned that Petit had been as good as his word. Forcing his way into a linen-chamber, he had wrapped his fetters in some loose cloths, then, ironed as he was, had scaled two or three walls, dropped into a garden, and hobbled away. Free-

ing himself of his chains, he coolly sold them in the market-place, and walked off. When relegated to the *cachot* or black hole, as not seldom chanced to him, Petit would contrive to post a letter to a friend: 'Meet me at such a place on such a day,' and, whether the friend kept the appointment or not, Petit himself was almost invariably 'on time.'

Arigonde was another who put a sore tax upon the vigilance of his guards. Like Petit, he had the art, approaching magic, of slipping loose in broad light, under the unseeing eyes of guards and comrades alike.

'My foot itches,' said Arigonde, and that day or the next Arigonde's ankle-ring and length of chain would be trailing empty at the heel of his ex-companion.

Oftener than not, the companion was as completely duped as the warder in charge of the party. He felt the drag on the chain diminished, turned about, and saw that he was alone.

'Old Arigonde's slung his hook again!' he said; and went on plying his pick, or shifting the gun-shot, or piling bricks, or turning the windlass; and left it to the guard to discover and give the signal of the escape.

Arigonde was one of the old *forçats* who could

walk out of the *bagne* without betraying himself by that awkward drag of the leg which resulted almost inevitably from wearing the chain.

The prisoner determined on flight seldom let slip an opportunity. The quick-witted Cochot remembered that salutes were fired in the harbours on the king's birthday.

'Very good!' thought Cochot. 'If in the midst of those salvos I should have the luck to gain the fields beyond, they might blaze away with their alarm-guns till all was blue; for, as they both play the same tune, who would know one from the other? All right! *I'll* have a birthday along with his majesty.'

Surely enough, when the day arrived, the guns of the *bagne* were banging unnoticed for Cochot, who was quietly trotting through the fields.

One of the escapes of Victor Desbois from Brest tested at once his audacity and his address. An inspector came to make his official tour of the *bagne*, and it did not seem to strike the sentry on duty at the gate that he had been very quick about it, for he was out again almost before he had been passed in. But the 'inspector,' who walked out with his nose in the air, was Victor Desbois. Having filed through his anklet, he had donned in an instant the

full uniform of inspector which he had confected out of paper, and with a wig and moustaches, also of his own manufacture, his disguise was perfect. Effrontery such as this fortune seldom fails to reward.

Opportunity of a change of costume presented itself on another occasion to the nimble Hautdebout, engaged in the convict tailor's shop. On a nail above his head hung a newly-finished warder's suit, which, as the warder was in hospital, was not to be delivered for a week to come. Measuring it with his eye, Hautdebout reckoned it a fair fit for himself. Missing only a warder's cap. This, in the course of a night or two, the prisoner put together out of a hundred little bits of cloth, abstracted at odd moments from the tailor's shop. With the cap in his pocket on the following day, when the foreman tailor's back was turned, Hautdebout whipped the warder's suit from the nail, slipped it on, and glided from the scene. Unluckily, the foreman a minute later missed the new suit from the nail, the alarm was given, and Hautdebout's brief term of office as *garde-chiourme* was ended. He lost his privileged place among the tailors, and was sent to the chain gang.

Piercy, condemned *à vie* for murder, saw some scaffolding erected for repairs, which seemed to offer a means of escape ideal in its simplicity. It stood conveniently against the wall. 'That ought to bear

me,' thought Piercy, and in a twinkling he found himself on the right side of the wall in Bourbon Street, Toulon. But there was a warder who could climb almost as well as Piercy, and who laid hands on him at the corner of the street. Another prisoner, equally adroit, was equally unfortunate in his affair. A rope served him for scaling the wall, but loosing his hold on the other side with the expectation of dropping into a quiet lane, he fell plump into a hand-cart in which a warder was taking his midday siesta. 'You never know your luck.' It came to the warder *en dormant*, bringing him the legal bonus of fifty francs for an arrest effected within the limits of the town.

The *forçats* were often aided in their escapes by relatives or friends who for that purpose had settled themselves temporarily in the neighbourhood of the *bagne;* and sometimes the means were furnished by an ex-convict, who made it his philanthropic business to cheat the authorities in the interests of old companions of the chain.

It would take long to enumerate all the modes of flight which were practised with a greater or less degree of success in one French *bagne* or another. It may be said of the great escapes that each one revealed a particular instinct on the part of the prison-breaker. The forger's plan would differ from

the house-breaker's, and the assassin by trade would never shrink from buying his liberty at the price of blood.

As may be imagined, it was the best-laid scheme which had the best chance of success. True, the most reckless attempt, with no preparation behind it, did not always end in failure, though this was its likeliest and most usual fate. With many prisoners, escape was a fixed idea, which presently became a monomania; and there were men who, possessing neither the address nor the daring requisite to the task, were nevertheless continually trying to get out. An old *forçat*, Gonnet by name, and sixty-eight years of age, became so famous by reason of his failures that his *maladresse* passed into a proverb; and a botched escape was known in the *bagne* of Toulon as a *gonette*. Patience and toil, long sustained and renewed after discovery had made them fruitless, did not always triumph in the end. André Fanfan, who had found or fought his way out of every prison in France, and who whenever he was in durance had the honour of a guard specially appointed to watch him, was brought back to Rochefort after one of his most brilliant triumphs over justice. In his communings with himself one day, André said:

'Now suppose, my boy, there was an underground passage, running the length of the yard, with a nice

little opening into the port. Couldn't you make a nice little opening in the wall, and find it? Of course you could!'

There proved to be one difficulty, and one only. The underground passage was not there.

'Dig one, my boy!' said André.

It needs a strenuous effort of the imagination to put oneself for a moment in André Fanfan's place—constantly watched, a solid mass of masonry to reduce, and no tools to his hand worth speaking of. A few grains of plaster or chips of stone undisposed of after the night's work were enough to betray the affair. Fanfan admitted a few 'pals' in the gang to his confidence, but took the direction upon himself, and with his own hands did the main part of the work. Night by night, after the gang had been chained upon the guard-bed, he wrenched his anklet off; and with his nails and a rusty bolt he bit his way inch by inch through stone and earth. He worked with the strength, swiftness, and silence of a mole; and never by a tap of the bolt or the scratching of a nail betrayed himself. He seemed to swallow the stone and earth which he displaced, for he left never a trace behind him. He was always on his plank, sound asleep, when the whistle gave the signal to turn out in the morning; his ankle safe in the ring. When the tunnel was within a yard or

two of completion, the plot was disclosed. One of André's subordinates, condemned for a breach of the rules to the black hole, begged an interview with the governor, and 'blew the gaff.' The governor, accompanied by an orderly with a dark lantern, made a 'round of surprise' the next night, and the bull's-eye was flashed upon André burrowing in his tunnel. He had an interview with his flogger, and it was noticed that he smiled at the last stroke but one. An inspiration had come to him under the lash. He was three weeks in hospital, and went to work again on the night of his release. A second time he was betrayed, and Jean le Bourreau, piqued that André had so soon forgotten him, made a terrible use of the whip on that occasion. André, however, had the satisfaction of learning that the governor had expressed astonishment at the skill of his work. He had made a second tunnel reaching to within arm's length of the harbour wall, and a kind of little vestry-room midway, in which he had bestowed provisions, tools, and a useful assortment of disguises.

Living in an atmosphere of suspicion, the *forçat* himself was nothing if not suspicious, and I have said that he preferred to plot alone. In certain resorts, however, he had need of assistance, and he could not dispense with it when he proceeded by means of the *cachette*. The *cachette* was the

temporary hiding-place to which the prisoner retreated when he separated himself from his gang, and in which he sometimes remained during several days, guarded and fed meanwhile by his comrades. It was a dangerous shelter at the best.

The prisoner Plasson ran up a *cachette* in one of the building yards, crept in at night, and made the stones fast with cement. He hoped that, if he lay there unobserved for a night or two, he would be able to force the walls with his hands; but when he made the attempt he found to his horror that the cement had hardened, and that he had in effect buried himself alive. In this frightful situation he overheard a warder-foreman give orders for a load of bricks to be deposited on that very spot; some building operations were to be commenced there the next day. That night, redoubling his efforts, he succeeded in tearing through the roof of his tomb. Although not fully prepared for flight, he had a rope around his waist, with the help of which he lowered himself over the harbour wall. Plasson had earned his freedom, if ever prison-breaker had, but he was not to possess it. He fell into the arms of two night-fishermen, who seized and carried him back to the *bagne*.

Tercet and Nercy dug a pit in the loose earth at

the back of the stone-cutters' shed, and provisioned it for several days. When all was ready they descended into their sepulchre, and their friends laid over it a slab of stone, which the buried pair were to raise at night. But, as so often happened where there were partners in a plot, Tercet and Nercy were informed against before nightfall, and a party of warders spared them the labour of lifting the stone.

In every *bagne*, the practice of constructing *caches* or *cachettes* gave rise to a special and curious industry. There was a class of prisoners less keen for liberty or more logical than others in calculating profits and losses, who were content, for a price, to assist those others to break their bonds. When a new-comer known to have resources arrived on the scene, the *cachette*-makers were not long in opening up negotiations. They proposed to construct him a shelter, and to furnish him with provisions, etc. The transaction was always one of ready money, and it did not extend far on the part of the contractors. When they had made the *cachette*, and seen their client into it, they wished him good luck and left him to his own devices. In addition to the average and ordinary dangers, an arrangement with the *cache*-makers had its own disadvantages. Like the warders who were open to a bribe, the *cache*-makers were not

always above selling their clients to secure the legal *prime;* and many a luckless individual was peached upon almost before he had ensconced himself in his retreat.

Over and above the fear of betrayal, the refugee had reason to dread a strategical movement on the part of the prison authorities against which he could not possibly guard. Thus, when it was suspected that an escaped prisoner was in hiding within the confines of dock or arsenal, and was being supplied with food by his comrades, the working-parties were withdrawn from the spot at which the escape had been effected, and replaced by others who, not being in the secret, could render no assistance to the occupant of the *cache.* If this ruse were successful, the prisoner in hiding might be starved into giving himself up, or he might be immured alive in his horrible *oubliette,* and be ultimately rescued a corpse.

There were certain collective escapes, known as the escape of eleven, the escape of ten, the escape of nine, etc. Cleverest was the escape of nine from Brest. The leader was a man condemned to the 'double chain;' that is to say, he was attached, with others, by a long and heavy chain to a bench in a separate hall of the prison; able to range only within the limits of his tether, and never released except for

a rare period of brief exercise in a walled yard. The double-chained men, moreover, were under the surveillance, day and night, of an armed and special guard. Nevertheless, the leader of the 'escape of nine,' by one of those fabulous devices of which the *bagne* had the secret, got rid of his chain and let himself out of the ward by a false key. There was but one way of reaching the roof, and that was by ascending a rope which hung almost within reach of a sentry. But this was also the rope of the prison bell!

Up went the leader like a cat, and the bell never tinkled. Arrived at the clapper, he swung there with one hand, while with the other he swaddled it carefully in linen. The bell being rendered dumb, the eight went up after their leader, who had meanwhile forced a passage through the roof. The whole party disappeared, but the leader was the only one who got clear away. The sheep for whom he had played 'bell'-wether were one by one brought back to the fold, and paid the usual forfeit.

A brilliant affair like this was, of course, the outcome of a well-ordered plan, and one can hardly believe that it dispensed altogether with the aid or countenance of one or more of the *gardes-chiourme*. Special circumstances apart, the rash and haphazard attempt of a moment seldom issued in success; on the

other hand, the scheme of most elaborate contrivance, depending as it must do on a combination of the slenderest chances, was liable to be frustrated by a breath.

The old, wary hand never set out without his *nécessaire*—a little case of metal or leather, which, if fully furnished, contained a saw and some other tool, a pocket knife, and a wig, whiskers, and moustaches made of hair or oakum. These *nécessaires* were minutely searched for on the persons of convicts who were thought to be planning an escape, and some very natty and well-equipped cases were very often brought to light.

Enough has been said to show that the troubles of the *forçat* were not over when he had got beyond the prison walls. Every hand almost was against him, and women joined in the chase as hungrily as men. Peasant girls wanting the money for a *trousseau* would denounce to the police a half-starved wretch flying for dear life, who had ventured to the door to beg a crust of bread. In the neighbourhood of Brest there were certain miserable families, dwelling for the most part in caves and hollows along the coast, who lived principally on the profits of *forçat*-hunting. At the booming of the cannon these jackals were up and sniffing the air; men, women, and children armed themselves with sticks, stones,

and old firelocks, and knowing every nook and cranny of the coast, every deserted hovel for miles around at which the fugitive might stay for breath in his flight, they were more than likely to pounce upon him before he had enjoyed the small consolation of a fair run for his money.

At no time and in no situation was the evader of justice really safe from arrest. There were old *forçats* who, after wandering for years from town to town, from village to village, striving to create an honourable existence, struggling with never a truce against malignant fate, gave up at last the unequal combat, and went back to the fetters of the *bagne*.

AN EPISODE IN THE HISTORY OF THE COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE.

I.

It was in a moment, as it were, that the favoured comedians of His Majesty (a doomed, forlorn Majesty who had virtually ceased to reign) found themselves in the whirlpool of the Revolution. The date was November, 1789. The Bastille had fallen; the nobles were flying; Louis and his Queen were under rigorous watch in the Tuileries; and Paris was in the grip of the National Assembly.

Twenty-five years earlier, Voltaire, an exile at Ferney, had written to Saurin (author of the tragedy 'Spartacus,' and adaptor of 'The Gamester'):

'Some day we shall introduce Popes on the stage, as the Greeks represented their Atreus and Thyestes, to render them odious. The time will come when the massacre of St. Bartholomew will be made the subject of a tragedy.'

His prediction was verified a little sooner than he may have anticipated. Early in the summer, as the ascendency of the Tiers-état became manifest, Marie Joseph Chénier dramatised this dark history in order to expose the crown and the mitre to additional odium. But Louis was still king in name, and he declined to sanction 'Charles IX.' His players, most of whom remained loyal to the authority to which they owed their corporate existence and their privileges, were unwilling to oppose his wishes; but revolutionary Paris was of another mind. Chénier went up and down the town declaring that his tragedy had been arbitrarily suppressed, and the pit of the Théâtre Français was clamorous for it.

Fleury, most elegant and most polished of his Majesty's comedians, as fine a gentleman off the stage as he was on it, at length stepped forward, for the play that was being given could get no hearing. M. Chénier's piece, he said, could not be put in rehearsal until the necessary permission had been received.

'Necessary permission!' a wrathful pittite leaped upon his bench and cried. 'We've suffered too much from censorship, and in future we mean to have what we want.'

'Monsieur,' returned the courteous player, 'the laws which have governed the Comédie Française

for a hundred years are still binding on it, and we cannot break them.'

'Good!' said the spokesman for the pit. 'You had better consult the municipality on the subject.'

Fleury gave an undertaking that this should be done, and the next day a deputation of the players waited on the representatives of the Commune, who, however, with somewhat unusual forethought, forbade the piece, on the ground that it might compromise public tranquillity.

Such a decision, it may be imagined, was little to the liking of the pit; the agitation increased, and in five days the authorities, yielding to the general demand, sent to request MM. les Comédiens Français (no longer, be it noted, *du Roi*) to place 'Charles IX.' on their stage as soon as possible. Needless to say, the king had not removed his veto, but the players had tasted the temper of the times, and another refusal was scarcely to be hazarded.

'Charles IX.' was put in rehearsal, and November 4th was the day named for the first performance. Naudet had been cast for the part of Coligni; Vanhove (with his Flemish accent and monotonous delivery) for L'Hôpital; Madame Vestris (who said to Chénier: 'I am really putting myself in peril for you. This queen-mother is so detestable that I am certain to be shot at!') for Catherine; St. Fal (the

wig-maker's son, and an excellent tragedian) for Henry of Navarre; St. Prix (with a figure 'to remind spectators of the Homeric heroes') for the fierce Cardinal,—but who should play the marksman of the Louvre balcony, Charles himself?

After much deliberation between the author and the senior members of the company, the part had been offered to, and eagerly accepted by, one of the youngest. This bold young man, whose age was then only twenty-three, was the son of a French dentist very prosperously settled in Cavendish Street, London, who had reared him almost exclusively on Voltaire and Rousseau. As a youth, he had played Hamlet in English at the Hanover Rooms; and Burke, Fox, Sheridan, and the Duchess of Devonshire had counselled him to make the stage his profession. In Paris, whither his father had sent him to manage his business in the Rue Mauconseil, Lord Harcourt had introduced the young man to Molé, who had just taken the town as Almaviva in Beaumarchais's 'Mariage de Figaro;' and it was through the influence of Molé that he made his first appearance at the Français, as Séide in Voltaire's 'Mahomet,' in October, 1787. His success was instantaneous, but the fixed usages of the House of Molière restricted him thereafter to parts of no importance; he must wait his appointment as the 'double' of

one of the senior members of the company. The name of this young player was François Joseph Talma, and his performance as Charles, the first notable character that had been assigned to him, was to mark a turning-point in his career.

On the night of the 4th, Republican Paris swarmed in the pit of the Français, and right in the middle sat Camille Desmoulins and the burly Danton. There were Royalists present also, and they did their royal best to have the piece condemned; but the opposition out-shouted them from first to last, and the new tragedy went with a kind of roar. The success of the night was Talma's. He came on the stage, we are told, a living portrait of Charles, and Fleury says of one particular scene that the sublimity of the young actor's conception filled them all with amazement.* Danton declared that the play should have for second title 'L'école des Rois.'

'Beaumarchais,' said he, 'killed the aristocracy; Chénier has cut the throat of royalty in France.'

But the fate of 'Charles IX.' hung yet in the balance. The clergy urged the king to suppress it, but poor Louis doubted whether he had the power to do so. Still, one might try; and the Gentlemen of the Chamber, through whom the king had been in the

* 'Mémoires de Fleury,' 1757-1820.

habit of instructing or counselling the players, were despatched with an order for the withdrawal of the piece. A little to the surprise of the whole Court, perhaps, the order was instantly obeyed; but neither the players nor Paris had seen the last of 'Charles IX.'

Talma's expulsion from the historic theatre, the next event of significance, was a consequence rising more or less directly from this affair. Chafing under the loss of the first fine part that had fallen to him, a part moreover which had made him famous in a night, he attempted to break through the rule which gave the senior actors a monopoly of the leading characters. Madame Vestris (who had been twenty years in the company) and one or two others sided with him, but the dominant party stood firm, and the attempt failed. Now, however, the House of Molière was divided against itself; on the one side stood an ardently Republican section, on the other the Reactionaries, who held to the fast-sinking vessel of royalty. The latter were the stronger party, and, careless of the danger which menaced every supporter of the Crown, they remained deaf to the advances of the National Assembly, who had just restored to them the rights so long denied by the Church.

The revolutionary Press took up the cause of Talma, and Camille Desmoulins's new journal, 'Révolutions de France et de Brabant,' published an

article against Naudet, in which he was accused of interfering with the liberty of the stage, of aiming a blow at the young tragedian, and of other grave misdemeanours. Talma himself had the bad taste to write a reply to the article, affirming the charges against his fellow-player to be true. A general meeting of the Comédie Française was convened in the green-room, and on the motion of Fleury it was unanimously resolved that Talma should be expelled from the theatre. Revolutionary Paris rallied to his side, and the new Municipality itself took the matter in hand. Fleury and his associates were requested to appear before Mayor Bailly at the Hôtel de Ville. Bailly was urbanity itself, but he informed the actors that their theatre was now a national institution, that their rules (which he advised them to 'regulate') could not entitle them to interfere with the gratification of the public and the prosperity of art, and that, in a word, M. Talma must be re-instated. The players withdrew protesting; they protested for a week or more, and then Talma was recalled. He did not stay long with them. The Assembly had already passed a decree which was in effect one of free trade in theatrical matters, enabling any body of actors to represent new plays in Paris. This was presently extended to include the works of dead authors, which meant the complete abolition

of the monopoly which the king's players had enjoyed since the days of Molière. New theatres arose; and Talma, taking with him Vestris, Dugazon, and others, went over to the Théâtre Français de la Rue de Richelieu.

From this date, however, the Comédie Française began to be viewed with suspicion and disfavour by the extreme Revolutionary party. The pit grew more and more turbulent, more and more hostile; and Fleury notes that, in rubbing on the rouge at night, his hand trembled at the thought of what he might have to undergo. For all this, neither he nor his comrades were shaken in their devotion to the hopeless cause of the Crown; and of that devotion they were to give one signal proof which, in the circumstances, seems worthy to be called heroic. The royal family were now prisoners in the Temple; their case was even then desperate, and scarcely less desperate, perhaps, was the case of all who were known to be, or suspected of being, in sympathy with them. At such a fateful moment, when the *tapes-dur*, those satyr-like janissaries of the Revolution, and the 'furies de la guillotine' were dancing the Carmagnole round the red-running scaffold of Samson, the king's comedians had the courage to produce a piece by Laya, written expressly in the interests of the abandoned Louis. It was almost like

stretching out their necks to the headsman; but they did it, and put their hearts into lines which aimed directly at Robespierre, Marat, and the whole faction of the Mountain. The Jacobins contrived to suppress the 'Ami des Lois' after the first performance, but the doings of the royalist players were now observed more closely and malignantly than ever. Their Ides of March drew near.

Late in the summer of 1793, François de Neufchâteau, a reforming member of the Legislative Assembly, who had thought with Laya that France was dancing the wrong road to freedom, wrote and sent to the Comédie a new version of 'Pamela.' Just half a century earlier, when, thanks to Voltaire's almost regal influence in letters, Frenchmen of education had become familiar with the language of Shakespeare and Milton, Pierre Lachaussée, who has been styled the inventor of the 'comédie attendrissante,' or sentimental comedy, produced on the stage of the Français a five-act play in verse, adapted from Richardson's prodigious novel. It was not to the taste of a Parisian audience, but in its printed form the work had a host of readers, and in the course of fifty years 'Pamela' became one of the best known tales in France.

This adaptation, which was called 'Paméla, ou la Vertu recompensée,' and which was at once accepted

by the Comédie Française, escaped in some way the jealous censorship of the Reign of Terror. It was given on August 1st, 1793. Consciously or not on its author's part, the tone of 'Paméla' reproduced the tone of the 'Ami des Lois,' and it sealed the fate of the players. Their Ides of March had come. 'Paméla' ran for eight nights, and was then suspended. Neufchâteau made a pretence of revising it, and the actors had the hardihood to announce a ninth performance. The curtain rose, and the piece went forward, the pit packed with *tapes-dur* in their foxskin caps and jackets smeared with the blood of that day's victims. At a line spoken by Fleury, some one sprang up in the pit and shouted:

'That passage has been prohibited by the Committee of Public Safety!'

'*Pardon*,' returned the imperturbable Fleury, 'the Committee of Public Safety has passed every word of it.'

There was a scuffle, and the disturber found himself ejected. It seems that he ran at once to the Jacobins' Club, to denounce the actors at the Comédie for poisoning public opinion, and speaking lines which the censor had forbidden. An hour later, as the curtain was rising for the second piece, news was carried to the green-room that the military had surrounded the theatre.

'Shall we run?' said pretty Mlle. Lange to Fleury at the wings.

'*M'amie*,' answered Fleury, 'it would be of no use. We are safer where we are. This is our 10th of August, *m'amie*.'

The piece was played to the end, and the players were allowed to quit the theatre; but all of them were arrested in their homes before midnight. It was one hundred and thirteen years since the association of the Comédie Française had been formed, in 1680, by letters patent under the royal seal; and now the doors of their play-house were closed. Let us follow the hardy players into their strange captivity.

II.

NOTHING in Europe has matched the spectacle of the prisons of Paris during the Reign of Terror. Mirabeau, Linguet, Latude (or the person who wrote in that name), the compiler of the 'Archives de la Bastille,' and others, have some poignant tales to tell of the prisons of the Monarchy; but none of these can match the histories of the Revolutionary prisoners, of Saint-Méard especially, whose 'Agonie de trente-huit Heures' falls on the ear at this day like the dripping of blood from a mortal wound. When the September Massacres were over, that butchery of a

hundred hours between the afternoon of Sunday the 2nd and the evening of Thursday the 6th (1792), it might have seemed that Ossa had been hurled on Pelion; but the swift, uninterrupted slaughter of those five successive days was followed, just one year later, by the protracted sufferings of a heterogeneous mass of some thousands of Royalists and Republicans, flung together in the strangest pell-mell, in all the prisons of Paris. The common gaols were not enough to hold them; palace and convent were made dungeons for the nonce. In the Conciergerie lay Marie Antoinette (to be followed at no long interval by Charlotte Corday), who could hear the drunken turnkeys, with their dogs at their heels, spelling out their roll of prisoners at lock-up. In Sainte-Pélagie was Madame Roland, stinting herself to save food for the poorer prisoners. In the Luxembourg was the flower of the French aristocracy, keeping up the old etiquette, with cards and music of an evening, and one ear straining for the footstep of Guiard, or his deputy Verney, coming with the list of those who were to die on the morrow. In the Abbaye, along with others, were the three hundred families of the Faubourg St. Germain, flung in there on a single night; the fourteen young girls who went to the guillotine in one tumbril, looking, it was said, like a basket of lilies; and the nuns of the con-

vent of Montmartre, who were guillotined in one batch. And in all these prisons, when death, with or without trial, came to be regarded as certain, was to be seen that curious exaltation of spirit which is shown by the playing of the *guillotine* game in the Conciergerie, by the last supper of the Girondins in the same prison, by the voluntary sacrifice of friend for friend, or parent for child, if the chance offered, and by the attitudes in death of Marie Antoinette, Danton, Madame Roland, and Charlotte Corday.

Into this world turned topsy-turvy, a world wherein the reality must have appeared to each new comer like some wild phantasmagoria, were cast, on the 2nd of September, 1793, the players of the Comédie Française. It is not certain whether the ladies of the company went to Saint-Lazare or to Sainte-Pélagie; the men were despatched to the Madelonnettes, erstwhile the asylum, or convent, of repentant Magdalens. Chief among them were Fleury, Vanhove, Dazincourt, Molé, Champville, St. Prix, and Dupont; all of them well-known men, of whom several had received special marks of royal favour. Fleury, one of the best known men in Paris, had been on the boards since the age of seven, when, as a rosy-cheeked, black-eyed boy, he made his *début* at Nancy, in the presence of the ex-King Stanislaus, and was kissed in the royal box by Madame de

Boufflers. He had pulled Voltaire's wig at Ferney, and in return for that impertinence the great man gave him some lessons in acting. His impersonation of Frederick the Great, on the eve of the Revolution, was so life-like that Prince Henry of Prussia, hardly able, it is said, to believe that his brother had not risen from the grave, presented him with Frederick's own snuff-box, saying,

'Nobody knows better than yourself how to use it.'

Molé, famous both in tragedy and comedy, had been petted at Court, and the young nobles used to flock to the theatre to take lessons in deportment from him. When he fell ill in 1767, the street in which he lived was blocked all day by the coaches of inquirers, and the night's performance was regularly preceded by a report of his condition. Dazincourt, a refined and often brilliant comedian, was the original representative of the barber in 'Le Mariage de Figaro.'

'We were no ordinary victims,' writes Fleury, 'we were a literary corporation, bearing with us into exile all the gracious past of France. We represented in miniature all that gives charm to life, and we were honoured as a body who had shown courage and a united front at a time when, apart from the trivial courage of dying, all courage had vanished, all union had been shattered.'

All the prisons of Paris at this date were in a state as wretched as the Newgate described by Howard, and Les Madelonnettes would seem, according to the authors of 'Les Prisons de Paris,' to have been almost the worst. To say that the prisons of the Terror were overcrowded would be rather to flatter the memories of those who were responsible for filling them. They were packed to their very utmost capacity of accommodation. The Madelonnettes, contrived to hold about two hundred prisoners, was charged with a complement of more than three hundred. On one floor, in cells five feet square and nine feet high, space was made for no fewer than twelve sleeping cots about eighteen inches wide. The cells had two small windows protected by crossed iron bars. Even with twelve beds to a cell, there were many prisoners who had to make shift in the corridors on mattresses well stocked with vermin. Marino of the police, who was the inspector of this prison, had an unvarying answer for all complaints:

'You won't be here long; this is only your antechamber. You must learn to wait. Oh, you shall have prisons big enough by and by, citizens!'

The Madelonnettes had a garden and a spacious courtyard, but Marino forbade their use to his prisoners, who were forced to take their exercise in the corridors.

When the players of the Français arrived at this noisome hold, it was already in the occupation of the suspects of the Mountain, the Contrat-Social, and the Marchés, not to mention a motley crew of thieves, forgers, and cut-throats. In the beginning they were all herded together,—players, political offenders, criminals; but the last mentioned were presently sent to an upper limbo of the prison, and the captives of the Revolution were distributed in the three remaining storeys.

Fleury tells us how they busied themselves in trying to make their cells more habitable; 'each of us a veritable Crusoe, nailing up shelves, putting down carpets, and so forth, until an order came to deprive us of all our tools.'

After infinite pains he succeeded in making himself a sort of desk, and adds that he possessed besides half a pair of snuffers: 'I don't mean that the snuffers were incomplete, but the other half belonged to Rochelle.' And he goes on: 'How we used to criticise one another's work, and brag of our own! I can still recall with a smile the pitying glance I bestowed on Champville's carpentry, and his air of commiseration as he watched me struggling with the saw.'

Relaxations less agreeable than these were the domestic offices which each had to bear his part in

—making the beds, sweeping and scouring the cells and corridors. Fleury rallies St. Prix, going about with his broom shouldered like a musket, sweeping here and there, very dignified but very clumsy, and apostrophising himself in an undertone:

'Poor Agamemnon, at what a pass do I behold you!'

But this life which, on the surface, seems not much more depressing than a picnic on a rainy day, had its ever-flowing under-current of tragedy. One guest or another (they were not yet sweeping them out by *fournées*, or batches, from the Madelonnettes) was always receiving his summons to withdraw. Ex-Lieutenant General of Police, M. de Crosnes, was one of the company in the Madelonnettes. He had distinguished himself by his charitable zeal in arranging a scheme under which the prisoners became the almoners of the poorer, finding them in food, clothing, and other necessaries. One night M. de Crosnes is playing trictrac in Fleury's cell with another proscribed noble, M. de Latour Dupin, when his name echoes through the corridors.

'No need to ask,' writes Fleury, 'what that summons boded!'

'Yes, yes, I'm ready!' says De Crosnes; and rose at once, as if he had an order to give. 'Gentlemen,' says he to his cell-mates, 'I fear I must bid you

good-bye! It is evidently my turn to night. I could not have spent my last hours more pleasantly. Good-bye! and God bless you!'

And he goes out as calmly as though he had been going to an audience of the king. Sometimes, of course, it was more painful than this; some prisoner, who had hoped against hope that his petition had been heard, would receive his answer in that same callous summons, and, soul and body failing him, would be carried half-inanimate to his death.

In all these prisons of the Terror, rigorous as the orders were at last, much depended upon the personal character of the *concierge*, or governor. In three or four instances the prisoners were exceptionally happy in their chief. One must not forget, for example, the heroism of Bouchotte, governor of Sainte-Pélagie, who, when he heard the red-bonnets nearing his prison during the September massacres, slipped his prisoners out by a subterranean passage, after having made his warders bind his wife and himself with cords in the courtyard of the gaol.

'Citizens,' he said to the butchers, when they had forced the doors, 'you are just too late! My birds have flown. They got wind of your coming, tied my wife and myself like this, and forced the bars.'

This is the handsomest story told of the governors of the Revolutionary prisons; but Benoît of the

Luxembourg, and Richard, who was little less than guardian angel to Marie Antoinette in the Conciergerie, have left us grateful memories. Not less fortunate were the prisoners of the Madelonnettes in their M. Vaubertrand.

'All contemporary chronicles, and the testimonies of all the prisoners,' say the authors of 'Les Prisons de l'Europe,' 'unite in praise of the humanity of Vaubertrand and his wife.'

It was Vaubertrand who insisted on a decent classification of the prisoners, who substituted beds for the cots in the cells, and who tried by every means to render the lot of his prisoners more tolerable and less humiliating. But neither the cares of Vaubertrand nor the precautions of Dr. Dupontet, his indefatigable lieutenant, could keep disease from a place in which the air was always fetid, the food indifferent, and the supply of water wretchedly inadequate. Epidemic sickness of some sort was common in nearly all the prisons of the Revolutionary epoch.

There was fever in the Conciergerie and fever in the Luxembourg; and in the Madelonnettes an epidemic of small-pox, which raged during many weeks. In none of these prisons was there any fit hospital; in the Madelonnettes none whatever, and the authorities persisted in their cruel refusal to open the court-yard. Brisk Dupontet (whose benevolent activity is

in fine contrast with the gross indifference displayed by most prison surgeons of his time) made the best of a heart-breaking situation. He insisted on the doors and windows being opened at certain hours, the cells and corridors being sprayed with vinegar, and so forth. For the prisoners who were still in health he prescribed abundant exercise before dinner and supper, and to give an interest to this he organised a series of military promenades in the corridors.

'We must have looked queer enough,' writes Fleury. 'The light in the galleries was so feeble that many of us carried candles. Imagine us on the march through those dim passages; pale faces which would not have smiled for an empire; here a nodding night-cap, there a flowered dressing-gown, or a white piqué over-all; and the yellow rays of the candles creating the most grotesque effects as we advanced, wheeled, or formed in line. Madame Vaubertrand, who would come sometimes to watch us, was kind enough to say that we were worthy a canvas of Rembrandt; the truth is, I fear, that we deserved to be mistaken for a caricature by Callot.'

Fleury's light-glancing humour comes often to the rescue; and he and his fellow-comedians, with their trained art of playing upon the emotions of others, must have softened and brightened many a dreary hour in the prison.

Meanwhile they were not forgotten of their enemies. They had lain seven months in prison, had learned the deaths of Marie Antoinette, of the twenty-two Girondins, of Egalité Orléans, Madame Roland, and Mayor Bailly, when Collot d'Herbois wrote to Fouquier-Tinville to hasten the case against them. Collot had been in touch with the theatre. He had been hissed off the stage at Lyons: he was the author, or adaptor, of a piece which had failed at the Français; and a sister of Fleury had assisted him to escape from the prison of Bordeaux, when he lay there under sentence of death on a conviction for felony. As morals went at that chaotic era, he had grounds sufficient for his hostility against the Comédie Française; it was the day of days for the wreaking of personal and private vengeance.

In very many cases the fate of the accused was sealed before the *dossier*, or brief, had been submitted to the docile tribunal. The judge merely passed sentence in accordance with the instruction conveyed to him by means of the capital letter in red ink on the margin of the brief. Thus, *R* stood for acquittal, *D* for banishment, and *G* for the guillotine. In cases where the docket had been branded with the fatal *G*, appeal was seldom allowed.

Six of the players were singled out for immediate trial, or rather, for immediate judgment, and the

six briefs bore the emblem of the guillotine. Fleury Dazincourt, and Mlles. Louise Contat, Emilie Contat, Raucourt, and Lange were d'Herbois's chosen victims. Françoise Marie Antoinette Raucourt, one of the most beautiful and stately women on the stage, had made her first appearance at the Français in 1772. She had risen quickly into fame, and Republican Paris remembered with envious hatred the splendour of her appearance as she drove through the streets to the theatre. Louise Contat, who had appeared four years later, was a beauty of a different type, and the best of all Susannes in Beaumarchais's play; her sister Emilie was a dainty little coquette on and off the stage. Annie Lange, barely twenty-one years of age, had but just made her mark; she was the Pamela of the piece which had wrought the downfall of the players.

'You will bring them before the Tribunal,' wrote Collot to Fouquier-Tinville, 'on the thirteenth Messidor.'

But the thirteenth Messidor passed, and the players had not appeared at Tinville's bar. Had Collot d'Herbois relented? No; but a very singular thing was happening at the Bureau des Pièces Accusatives, the office through which all proofs of royalist guilt had to pass before being delivered to the public prosecutor. At the daily risk of his life, the clerk

in charge of these documents was destroying them wholesale. The name of this forgotten hero of the Terror was Charles Labussière, once low-comedian of the obscure Théâtre Mareux, who was using his position of trust under the bloody masters of the Revolution to save the lives of hundreds of innocent creatures. Shift the scene a moment, and watch at his stealthy task of salvation the one-time humble player of the humble Mareux Theatre, the favourite butt of the grisettes and shopboys in the pit. There was not in all France at this hour a braver man than he.

'My first care [he used to say] was to save as many fathers and mothers as I could. Having abstracted a certain number of pièces accusatives, I locked them carefully away in my oaken drawer. But as it was absolutely necessary to leave some work for the executioner, I had to cast a certain number of documents into the fatal portfolio (feeling as if I were myself dropping the heads into Samson's basket). Imagine, however, the joy I felt in rescuing the others! But just here arose a very embarrassing question: What should I do with the papers I had removed? Burn them? Impossible; there wasn't a fire, for it was the height of summer. They were too bulky to carry away, for everyone was searched on leaving the office. I racked my brains for a means of escape for my *protégées*. My forehead burned, and I turned to bathe it in the bucket

of water which stood in a corner of the room to cool our wine for *déjeuner*. That plunge into the bucket was an inspiration—why not diminish the bulk of my precious papers by soaking them in the water? Carrier had his *noyades* of death; I would have my *noyades* of salvation! Quick! I threw my papers into the bucket, softened and rolled them into pellets. The pellets were easily bestowed in my pockets; I slipped out unquestioned, stepped across to the Bains Vigier, set a-going my little flotilla of innocents, and watched anxiously enough their easy progress down the banks of the Place de la Revolution.'

So, in a moment, the story has come to an end,—for the dockets of the six comedians of a Majesty who had long since been decapitated had swum with the rest of the flotilla. The fraud upon the Committee of Public Safety was discovered, and fresh briefs were prepared against the players. But their Ides of March were now not only come but gone; for the ink was not dry upon the second set of briefs when the fateful pistol-shot in the Hall of Convention announced that the Reign of Terror was over, and the 10th Thermidor reversed the decree of the 13th Messidor.

Three sentences may make a fitting postscript. Labussière escaped, and told his story often, 'in the brusque way he had,' writes our friend Fleury, 'with

an odd little stammer, and an up-and-down movement of his black eye-brows.'

Talma, whose passionate Republicanism had carried him safely through the Terror, was the first to welcome on their release the comrades who had banished him; and there is a pretty story of Louise Contat falling on his neck, when she was told that he had spent half his savings to get possession of a letter in which Fleury had incriminated himself in the interests of Charlotte Corday. At a dinner given by Dazincourt all differences were healed: the House of Molière rose upon its ruins in a single night; and, to the joy of Paris, the reunited players made their first appearance in 'The Cid.'

GAVARNI.

GAVARNI has been compared with Balzac. The comparison is daring, but not inapt. Gavarni the artist and Balzac the novelist, each in his way, made Paris and her people his own; and the pencil of the one was as fertile and as indefatigable, as conscientious and as veracious, as the pen of the other. Both men had an enormous power of production, and both were scrupulous sticklers for the truth of things. By critics who would not, or who could not, judge him rightly Gavarni was sometimes dubbed a caricaturist. He took no offence, but he said quite truly that the description did not fit him. Satirist he was, and humourist, and philosopher, and an almost unrivalled delineator of types; but in the ten thousand designs which represent his work,* there is perhaps not one which is properly a caricature. In the vast

* The brothers Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, Gavarni's best biographers, say that he completed ten thousand pieces.

range and variety of his performance, again, Gavarni stands shoulder to shoulder with the author of the 'Comédie Humaine.' All Paris came within his ken, he swept all Paris into his portfolio. High and low, here, there, and everywhere, Gavarni's pencil embraces all types: the aristocrat, the *bourgeois*, the banker, the lawyer, the money-lender, the borrower, the student, the *grisette* and all other women, the actor, the opera-singer, the dancer, the debtor in prison, the criminal on his way to prison, the young dandy, the old rake, the politician, the pawnbroker, the mountebank, the labouring-man, the clerk, the street arab, the 'enfant terrible,' the 'enfant prodigue;' the hawker, the *concierge*; and to each of these he attaches some little pungent legend of a line or two, the words of which seem to drop into the ear from the street-corner, the *salon*, the attic, or the *coulisses*, like the unfrozen words in Rabelais.

Sainte-Beuve reminds us, in the acute and sympathetic essay with which he prefaces the collection of 'Masques et Visages,' that Gavarni was a 'nom de guerre,' a pencil-name. At the counter of the publisher Susse, to whom he had carried one of the first of his drawings which was worth printing (he had drawn, as Balzac had written, an incredible quantity of rubbish), it was suggested to him that he should give the work his signature.

'People will buy a print with a name under it,' said Susse.

Posed for a moment, the artist bethought him of a certain valley of Gavarnie, in the Pyrenees, where he had lived some hungry and happy weeks. Cutting off the feminine *e* from the name, he signed his sketch *Gavarni*, and thus was baptised, says Sainte-Beuve, all the work of his that was to come.

Guillaume-Sulpice Chevallier was his name, and he was born in Paris on the 13th of January, 1804. His father, Sulpice Chevallier, fifty-nine years old when this son came to him by a second wife, sprang from a substantial family of coopers, whose first home was in Burgundy. Old Sulpice had a taste of the Revolution, and kept a rather bitter memory of it. To his father and his mother Gavarni was always tenderly devoted; at thirty-one years of age he wrote in his journal, on the 29th of September, 1835:

'I am dishonoured in my own eyes. I had promised my father not to smoke until the 12th of October, and I have just smoked a cigar. Let me note it down against myself.'

He told the De Goncourts that, when a boy, he used occasionally to spend an evening in a wine-shop; one night the father followed, and, seating himself at a table facing his son's, regarded him

silently with no recognition in his eyes. Gavarni never returned to the tavern.

His education was quite professional; geometry, design, linear design with a view to architecture, and some practice in that delicate branch of mechanics which is concerned with instruments of precision. At twenty he was drawing plans in a surveyor's office in Tarbes, spent some years there not over-profitably, and then set out upon a long and lonely travel through the Pyrenees (reduced at times to mending his shoes with bits of paste-board), determined to be a landscape-painter, or nothing.

His second epoch opens in Paris, in the year 1828. Up to this period we have it on the authority of the De Goncourts that Gavarni had failed very badly. A writer he might be, for the journals which he kept all his life showed him even now endowed with powers of thought and a real gift of style; but a landscape-painter,—no! He had scarce a notion of colour (he who, with the pen, could set out a scene glowing with harmonious tints), and his drawing of a landscape was stiff, jeune, and childish. But Paris was to find out the true stuff in him. He was twenty-four when he returned to it from the solitudes and silences of the Pyrenees, and that vast and varied human tableau moved him strangely, pro-

ducing in him, as the De Goncourts say, 'a kind of fever and burning curiosity.' He saw that Paris was his world, and with his pencil he would conquer it.

'Il reste à être vrai' (it remains to be true, or, one must stick to life itself); such a motto he had chosen, and to this motto his whole artistic life was entirely and unswervingly loyal.

But the stiff and formal hand of the surveyor's clerk, of the designer of instruments of precision, had still a great deal to unlearn, and a candid critic of the Gavarni of this date describes him as producing 'only wretched little things.' He did some vignettes for Béranger, a set of grotesques for a dealer, and a number of Pyrenean sketches,—all of which are properly forgotten. His best work at this time was buried in his note-books; sketching like a madman in the streets, the *cafés*, the theatres, the tea-gardens, the public ball-rooms, he stored his memory with faces, figures, types of every kind, till, in later years, he was able to dispense altogether with the living model. In his prime he could reproduce the likeness of a man whom he had seen in the street twenty years earlier, and all his best and most characteristic figures have the air of having never sat for the likeness that betrays them. The artist has taken his models unawares; their attitudes are the attitudes of life itself. This is the happy

outcome of those years of study, patient at once and frantic,—morning noon and night,—in all places where the human subject was to be observed in his proper and easy habit. When his pencil grew nimble, the sketch was made (in outline, at least) before the unconscious sitter was aware of it. He designed a great many fashion-plates for Emile de Girardin's new venture, 'La Mode,' and evidently with much success.

Gavarni had a passion for fine clothes, clothes which were a part of the distinction and individuality of the wearer. In his own attire he was original, elegant, and not a little dandified; and he would say, when the money ran short:

'I don't mind pulling the devil by the tail, but I mean to do it in yellow kids.'

His work for 'La Mode' is unknown to me, but the De Goncourts declare that such fine, curious and delicate fashion-drawings had not before been printed.

In 1832 appeared the two series of 'Les Travestissements' and 'Les Physionomies de la Population de Paris;' and now, at the age of twenty-eight, Gavarni was a known and appreciated talent. The Press took note of him: Eugène Sue wanted his pencil; and Balzac (by whom he had been commissioned to illustrate 'La Peau de Chagrin') made him

the subject of a long and appreciative article in a newspaper of the day. In the first of these series Gavarni shows himself the *fantaisiste* of costume.

'All the light, and colour, and gaiety of the *bal masqué*,' wrote Balzac, 'sparkle in these designs. Any one of these costumes would confer distinction and originality upon the most insignificant wearer. The ladies will be longing to don them; their husbands will insist upon their doing so.'

'Les Physionomies' had an instant and signal success, and over these Balzac waxed yet warmer.

'It is not so much that Gavarni poses his subjects as that he *confesses* them,' says the delighted critic; 'he makes each one of them tell his little history.'

Society began to invite the young artist abroad. Duchesse d'Abrantès constituted herself his patroness, and at her house he met pleasant and famous people. He is all at once in the whirl of it: dinners, suppers, balls, the opera, the theatre, the race-course; so much and so continuously in the whirl of it that he notes in his journal,—'Actually slept at home last night.'

Despite his *bourgeois* birth and rearing, Gavarni, as Sainte-Beuve insists, was always a polished gentleman. He had an air and manner of his own; something of reserve, something even of *hauteur*. He abhorred in everything the little and the common-

place, and the originality which was stamped upon his work was no less a character of the man. He talked well, easily, and freshly, and was never wanting in ideas. Théophile Gautier, whose acquaintance he had just made, has left a description of Gavarni at twenty-eight, which brings before us a tall, slender, graceful and handsome young man, with a quantity of fair hair, moustaches curled and pointed in the military style, arrayed in the height of fashion, with a certain English severity of detail ('avec quelque chose d'Anglais pour la rigueur du détail en fait de toilette'), and possessing in the highest degree the sentiment of modern elegance.

What Gavarni wanted now was a paper of his own, and after infinite pains, and apparently without a *sou*, he brought out number one of 'Le Journal des Gens du Monde' (one did not dine at Duchesse d'Abrantès' for nothing), to which his own airy and charming pen contributed the leading article. Alfred de Vigny wrote for it, and so did Sainte-Beuve, and Gautier, and the elder Dumas, and Victor Hugo, to say nothing of titled amateurs with the faithful Duchess at their head; and Gavarni flooded it with the humours of his pencil. But when an artist begins a newspaper, the wicked fairy is always present at the birth; and the new journal, for all its high-sounding title, died in throes of its twentieth number.

It left Gavarni the heritage of a debt which, with the inevitable renewals, hampered him for years. In 1834 he was scouring Paris for money, and, not finding enough of it, the end of that year saw him an inmate of the debtors' prison of Clichy.

If Dickens had not written 'Little Dorrit,' it would be interesting to write of Clichy; but Clichy and the Marshalsea seem to have been almost the same prison, with the same little cliques, the same little idle etiquette, the same little strained humours (in the easiest of prisons nobody laughs from his heart), and the same little genuine tragedies which can never be quite covered up. Gavarni, a natural philosopher, fell back on his philosophy in Clichy, and missed nothing of the sordid panorama. Restored to freedom, he went to work at once upon the series known as 'L'Argent,' in which he has set out all the acrid wit and all the lowly and unromantic pathos of the relations of borrower and lender. From the smug money-lender, wondering that anybody should grumble at this thirty-five per cent., we pass to the seedy and desolate figure of his victim, the broken debtor, standing disconsolate against the door of his cell, digesting the 'first quarter of an hour of a five years' sentence.'

The cares of debt notwithstanding (for debts began anew after Clichy), Gavarni was producing

rapidly in these days. Most notable among the series were 'Les Fourberies de Femme' (the Tricks of the Sex), and the theatrical sets of the 'Musée de Costume,' the 'Coulisses' and the 'Actrices.' In 'Les Fourberies' he dealt with some of the whims, faults, vices of the society of his day; but Gavarni's satires were never brutal and never cruel; and as for women, whom he fascinated all his life, though he himself seems never to have been very seriously in love, the artist is always on the side of chivalry. After these came the famous and witty gallery of Students ('Etudiants de Paris') a collection of some sixty plates, wherein are preserved for our entertainment an existence and a world of the past. For the student of Gavarni's epoch (the more or less civilised descendant of the mad crew of Murger) has disappeared from Paris as utterly as his true old Latin Quarter, that 'Paradise of misery and capital of hope.' Here he is, however, in these delightful and veracious pages; the student of fifty years ago, a little State within the State; the future of France in an extraordinary hat or cap, and yet more extraordinary trousers, the *redingote* buttoned to conceal the absence of waistcoat, long-haired and decidedly fantastic; the student who is the personal enemy of all 'sergents de ville' and other guardians of order; the student who

is habitually penniless, but who has his own *cafés*, his own quarters, his appointed place in the theatre, his immemorial usages, and his 'religion revealed by Béranger;' the student who pawns his velvet smoking-cap, or his favourite meerschaum, or his entire library, to have the wherewithal of a night at the Bal de l' Opéra, where, as fast as one dance is forbidden, he invents another and a wilder one, to the despair of authority in a three-cornered hat.

Carnival-time, by the way, threw Gavarni into a veritable fever. He complains in his journal that he cannot sleep at night for excitement and the twitchings in his legs after incessant dancing; a notice on his door told his friends that the Saturday gossip was suspended, and wherever the *cotillon* was, Gavarni's heels would be flying. Sainte-Beuve says that Gavarni re-created the Carnival and made it young again. He set a new fashion in costumes for the *bal masqué*, which, before his time, had followed year after year the traditional types of the old Italian comedy, Pierrot, Arlequin and Company. How many costumes Gavarni designed for this wear, he himself could not have said, but it is certain that everybody wanted a hint for one from his pencil. Sainte-Beuve thinks he may have borrowed a notion now and then from Watteau, but is sure that his

happiest inspirations were always those of the fairy in his own brain.

In the three unrivalled series of 'Le Carnaval,' 'Les Débardeurs' and 'La Foire aux Amours,' we are flung into the midst of the unique nocturnal life of that surprising festival. The De Goncourts say that the *bal masqué* of this era was a kind of *gymnastique enragée*, or acrobatism run mad; but it had its graceful as well as its extravagant and clownish sides, and if the humour was often Pantagruelian, it was sometimes also as fine as a *mot* of Voltaire.

Here, in these rare albums, is the whole frenetic, many-voiced and many-coloured Carnival for you, the Carnival of Paris and Gavarni, the Carnival that was and that is not, the Carnival that will be no more: the storm and whirl of music and the daring dance; the brassy lights; the tossing, foamy sea of the white bonnets of countless Pierrots; the dominos of silk and velvet; the shimmer and flutter of ribbons and laces, the nodding of plumes and feathers in the yellow dusty air; the grisettes in black silk masks, zouave jackets, and wide velvet trousers reaching to the ankle; the spangled harlequins; the monkeys with tails half pulled off in the *mêlée*; the bear taking his head off in a corner to cool himself, and discovering the homely and spectacled visage of a

middle-aged citizen; the savages whom no savage region would acknowledge; the false noses of all shapes, sizes, and colours; the false beards, and goggle eyes, and pasteboard cheeks; the mock generals, with a hearth-brush or a poker dangling from the sword-belt; the bawling of an ultra-sentimental song to a guitar out of tune, heard for a moment above the hubbub; the sale by auction of an Adam and Eve 'who have lost the money for their return to Eden, and will refuse no offer in reason;' the noisy appeal of a reveller from the ledge of a box, to the crowd below, to tell him the address of the maiden aunt with whom he had promised to spend the evening quietly; and of another, imploring the master of the ceremonies to pay off his debts and set him up in business as an ambassador; the fierce burlesque quarrels; the ceremonious salutes preface-ing some ridiculous or impudent request; the invitations to supper; the final galop, that galop of *Lénore* in which the revel attains its grand climacteric; and then, at last, the pouring out of the motley throng into the pale streets at daybreak.

His innumerable pictures of the Carnival set out at his best Gavarni's genius for the grotesque. No one has ever contrived to get so much expression out of a false nose; no one has made a dead mask speak as these masks of Gavarni speak. The false

nose in these cartoons becomes a live feature, which declares the identity it would conceal. The mask of tinted pasteboard observes, listens, meditates, and utters itself in epigram.

The phrases in epigram, attached to the cartoons, were as deeply relished in Gavarni's Paris as were the cartoons themselves; and he gave a world of pains to them. They were always (with two very trivial exceptions, I believe) of his own invention, and the best of them defy translation. He had a taste in letters as exact and scrupulous as his taste in art, and a nice and witty phrase haunted and possessed him. Someone said that if a happy *mot* were dropped at table, Gavarni would pick it up and dine on it. Balzac not excepted, no one has handled the spoken language of the day,—the language of the streets, the shops, the music-halls, the *cafés*, the *coulisses*, the studios—as Gavarni has done; that language within the language, non-academical but national, clipped, brisk, pointed, coloured, and ever-changing. By this time he had conquered and had made his own the Paris of his heart. His drawing, in this or the other illustrated journal, was the artistic event of the day; it was demanded at the *café*, it was discussed at the club.

In 1847 Gavarni found himself in London. His renown had gone before him,—and the De Goncourts

tell a curious story, which has the air of apocrypha, of the Queen and Prince Albert, 'in their Palace of Windsor,' seated on the floor like children, culling Gavarni's drawings from a pile of French newspapers, and cutting out and pasting in an album those they liked best. It is certain, however, that society in London was quite prepared to lionise the distinguished satirist; but Gavarni had other plans. He was never of a very social or expansive habit, and during his lengthened stay in this country the drawing-rooms of fashion did not see him. Thackeray called, and was anxious to do for him the honours of the West-end; and Dickens followed Thackeray; but Gavarni's extreme reserve chilled them both, and they left him to himself. He found his pleasure in making studies of the common folk (of which the *Illustrated London News* published many), and it is interesting to note how soon and how thoroughly he seized the English physiognomy. His sailors, costermongers, hot-potato-men, hawkers, and the victims of gin, are not inferior in truth and exactness to the types which he had been sketching all his life in Paris.

Gavarni's voluntary isolation did not irk him in the least, and he liked England and the English.

'England,' he wrote to a friend in Paris, 'is the

most charming country in the world for the purely material life, but beyond that the heart seems to have nothing to lean upon. It is their lack of heart' [an odd criticism, this, from a native of Paris] 'that makes the English so easy to get on with' ('si peu gênants').

Of the women he says:

'I would tell you about them if I could, but I really don't know what an Englishwoman is. I have an idea, however, that in full attire, she is no longer a woman but a cathedral' ('ce n'est plus une femme, c'est une cathédrale').

Since he deliberately withheld himself from society in London, it would be incorrect to describe Gavarni's visit there as a social failure; but he was guilty of one glaring breach of etiquette and the polite usages which would have made success in the great world ever afterwards impossible. It appears that he had been commissioned to make a sketch of her Majesty, and that, at the very last moment, he had the bad taste to forego compliance with the royal behest. Palette and brushes had actually been despatched to the palace, and Gavarni was following, or on the point of following, when he suddenly decided not to go. The gigantic rudeness of the decision compels an unwilling laugh; but let me

hasten to add that Gavarni, a man of the sincerest natural politeness, never pardoned himself for that unpardonable solecism, and that, in making confession to the De Goncourts, he assured them that he could not say what mad impulse had inspired him. The offence was, nevertheless, remembered against him in this country, and when, some years later, he received the decoration of the Legion of Honour, the *Times* published a leading article in protest.

Back in Paris, after a tour on foot through the Hebrides, Gavarni found the calls upon his magic pencil as numerous as ever. He was happy in finding also that advancing years in no way stayed his powers of production. He not only retained at fifty the physical freshness, vigour, and vitality of thirty; but, at this age, his fecundity of imagination and facility of execution enabled him to furnish for the Comte de Villedeuil's new journal, 'Paris,' three hundred and sixty-five cartoons in three hundred and sixty-five successive days, a feat perhaps unrivalled. Never a sheet was wasted on a rough sketch, nor had the artist anything before him to assist his memory; yet the works of this period, begun and finished at a sitting, and without the intermission of a single day, include the series of 'Les Lorettes Vieillies' (the sombre and sometimes sordid humours of decayed and decrepit love), 'L'Histoire de Politiquer' (fine

and penetrating satires on politics and political persons, abhorred all his life by Gavarni),* 'Les Partageuses' (a series which discovers anew his extraordinary knowledge of the woman and women of Paris), 'Les Propos de Thomas Vireloque' (ragged cynic and philosopher, a 'Wandering Jew of moral Doubt and modern Desolation,' the gravedigger of mundane illusions and social unveracities), and 'Les Anglais chez Eux.'

From his quarters in the Rue Fontaine St. Georges, where, out of a vast chamber with thirteen windows, had been contrived the very oddest collection of rooms and cabinets, Gavarni had betaken himself to Auteuil. Here he had become the possessor of an ideal retreat; a snug house, a retired garden, and a perfect little park enclosing them. In this cherished spot, his artist's fame at its height, Gavarni had but three wishes: to work as it pleased him, and no longer at the bidding of editors and publishers; to dream dreams; and to enrich and beautify his little estate. Years of quiet living, and enjoyment of his own, had wedded his heart to this placid homestall; and his terraces and avenues of chestnuts, his

* In the matter of politics he had a fixed and statutory formula: 'Ce qu'on appelle esprit public est la bêtise de chacun multipliée par la bêtise de tout le monde' (the thing they call public opinion is your stupidity and mine, multiplied by everybody's).

hills and valleys in miniature, had drained his coffers of hundreds of thousands of francs. On a sudden, warning came that he must quit. They were building a new railway, and that blind inflexible line was destined to cut Gavarni's existence in twain. He appealed by letter to the king, but his letter (never received, perhaps,) was never answered. He saw the roof stripped from his house, his studio hurled in ruin and confusion, his beloved garden bruised and crushed.

He was in failing health at the time, and his leaf withered quickly. He bought a dreary big house in Paris, which he did not want, and which he could not afford to maintain. Here, within a pace or two of the teeming, brilliant life which no pencil had ever rendered quite as his had done, he made himself a living sepulchre. He became, the De Goncourts say, a man for whom time had ceased; a man who knew neither hour, day, nor month. He scarcely crossed his own threshold, and scarcely suffered it to be crossed. He died on the 24th of November, 1866; and his tomb bears the simple, proud inscription: GAVARNI.

THE END.

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OF
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